

ISTITUTO PIA SOCIETÀ
FIGLIE DI S. PAOLO
CASA GENERALIZIA
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Dearest sisters,

At 2:55 p.m. today, the Solemnity of the Immaculate Conception, the Virgin Mary visited our Servizio Animazione Biblica community of Belo Horizonte, Brazil, to lead to new life in the kingdom of heaven a fervent apostle of the Word, our sister:

AUTH SR. ROMI
born in Linha Salto (RS), Brazil, on 6 February 1948.

Sr. Romi was a very responsible sister who placed all her energies and talents at the service of evangelization through her passionate and tireless proclamation of the Word of God. She entered the Congregation in Porto Alegre on 2 September 1960 at the age of 12. Although still very young, she yearned to devote herself to making the Lord better known and loved. After a time of formation, she made her novitiate in the house of São Paulo DM, concluding it with her first profession on 30 June 1967, at the age of nineteen.

As a young professed, Sr. Romi obtained her first academic degree in philosophy and carried out Bible Weeks and itinerant diffusion of the Word in the diocese of São Paulo and from our Belo Horizonte book center. For three years (1985-1988), she served as superior of the Belem community while at the same time working for a baccalaureate in theology. After obtaining this degree, she was sent to Rome to continue her studies at the Pontifical Gregorian University, from which she received a licentiate in Biblical Theology in 1992. Upon her return to Brazil, Sr. Romi was assigned to the Belo Horizonte community, called “the House of the Word” because it was dedicated to the Service of Biblical Animation (SAB). She spent the rest of her life in this community, making her own its objectives, which were completely focused on the study, deepening, and communication of Sacred Scripture.

She literally dedicated her whole life to the biblical formation of the people of God, spending and overspending herself so that the Word of the Lord would be known, loved and assimilated into people’s daily lives. Sr. Romi’s health was rather frail, but when it came to organizing Bible courses and promoting the biblical formation of various categories of people, she did not mind being tired; in fact, she was always ready and willing to participate in the projects organized by SAB.

With the help of her sisters and other experts, she created a Bible Project called *Biblia em Comunidade (The Bible in the Community)*, comprised of three modules that present an overall look at the Bible, biblical theologies, and the Bible as literature. This Project, complete with supplementary aids, is widely used throughout Brazil and has trained hundreds and hundreds of pastoral workers, seminarians, religious and lay people. It is also used in other Pauline circumscriptions, especially Bolivia, Venezuela and Angola. Sr. Romi herself wrote a good part of the supplementary aids, was the initiator and coordinator of the Distance Education Course, and also taught courses conducted in presence.

Among her other numerous responsibilities, she coordinated the *Shema* group that prepares content for the Bible Month celebrated annually in Brazil, and she herself repeatedly animated and promoted this pastoral work on the national level. She was the director of the Brazilian Association for Biblical Research for more than 30 years, head of the Province’s Biblical Animation Service, and in addition to this, taught Sacred Scripture at the Catholic University and St. Thomas Institute. In the Archdiocese of Belo Horizonte, she started a course for lay people entitled “Living Theology. Along with other sisters, she taught pastoral workers for 9 years in the favelas and other urbaneripheries of Belo Horizonte. Most recently, she was coordinating a team of cartography experts and biblical scholars with a view to publishing biblical maps. She has also written numerous books, all geared toward explaining and meditating on Sacred Scripture.

Sr. Romi had a special gift for communicating the Word of God with a deep conviction that captivated the laity and motivated them to “multiply” the Word in parishes and dioceses. This apostolate gave her the enthusiasm to continue her biblical mission even though her health was slowly failing. She felt it was an immense privilege to have the opportunity to “feed” countless people with the living bread of the Word and she transmitted to her sisters the urgent need to cultivate the “teaching” dimension of the Pauline vocation through an ongoing commitment to study in order to become not only experts but also witnesses as to how the Word should be lived in one’s daily situation.

Forty days ago, Sr. Romi suffered a severe brain stroke that interrupted her intense activity and made it necessary for her to be hospitalized in the intensive care unit of a nearby hospital. By now the time had come for her too to “pull down her sails” and end her earthly journey. In keeping with the Apostle Paul’s urging to his devoted disciple Timothy, our sister leaves us all with the pressing invitation to carry out our mission of proclaiming the Gospel by faithfully fulfilling the ministry entrusted to us (cf. 2 Tm. 4:2, 6).

Affectionately,


Sr. Anna Maria Parenzan

Rome, 8 December 2022