

ISTITUTO PIA SOCIETÀ  
FIGLIE DI S. PAOLO  
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Dearest Sisters,

Shortly after midnight last night, our merciful Father visited our community of Naples Capodimonte, Italy, to lead to his abode of peace and light our sister:

**PICCERILLO ANTONIA – SR. MARIA LUCILLA**  
**born Casalba (Caserta), Italy, on 8 October 1931.**

Sr. M. Lucilla was a simple-hearted sister who lovingly dedicated her whole life to the Lord in a spirit of poverty and selflessness that was truly uncommon.

She entered the Congregation in the community of Rome on 27 January 1953, and underwent her initial formation and novitiate in that house, concluding this stage of her Pauline journey with her first profession on 19 March 1956. She spent her Juniorate carrying out itinerant outreach in the diocese of Trent and then returned to Rome to prepare for her perpetual profession, which she made on the feast of St. Joseph, 1961.

Aware that she had offered everything to the Lord, she inserted herself with complete availability in the community of Caltanissetta and then in that of Agrigento, proclaiming the beauty of the Gospel from the community kitchen and, when possible, through itinerant diffusion of the Word of God to families, parishes, and institutes. From 1969-1986, she was a member of our Divine Providence community, Rome, from which she continued, with unstinting self-donation, to take care of the many services necessary to ensure the smooth running of the house. She also worked for a few years in the shipping department. In Benevento, Naples Duomo, Palermo and—in the last twenty-five years—in Naples Capodimonte, she devoted herself wholeheartedly to hundreds of behind-the-scenes services, large and small, needed by our sisters, to keep our communities functioning well. Sr. M. Lucilla was always ready to help out anywhere: in the kitchen, the laundry, the vegetable garden, the orchard.... Her natural orientation was to do good to others by focusing on the daily needs of the sisters: no service was too small or unimportant for her to carry out. In fact, in her later years, she spent most of her time picking oranges in the large garden of our Naples community, using the fruit to prepare tasty juices, which she then sent to FSP communities throughout Italy.

Sr. M. Lucilla loved to crochet and embroider and her handiwork can be found on dozens and dozens of doilies and pillow slips, especially the rendition of a theme dear to her heart: that of a large, dry tree, which she considered to be the inspiration of her life. In fact, she saw her life reflected in a short poem about that tree, written by a Dehonian missionary, Fr. A. Marchesini. In the poem, the priest describes the tree as dry and leafless, its bare branches thrusting toward the sky. The tree can no longer bear fruit, nor can its branches offer any shade. Not even a bit of bark remains on its trunk. It has been stripped of everything—its life transformed into prayer.

Sr. M. Lucilla was the same: stripped of everything, she was eager to have nothing for herself but simply to be a gift of God to others. Her life, aimed at heaven, consisted of prayer and self-offering.

Her health had always been fragile due to heart problems that made it necessary for her to wear a pacemaker. About 10 days ago, she was admitted to Queen of Apostles Hospital, Albano, where she was treated for severe kidney failure.

Discharged from the hospital just two days ago, Sr. M. Lucilla returned to Naples for a heart checkup but an unexpected crisis led to her death and ultimate meeting with her Lord and Master.

Like the great Doctor of the Church St. Augustine, whose memory we celebrate today, Sr. M. Lucilla never tired of seeking the Lord, the living source of eternal love. We picture her as joining the great saint in contemplating the ever-old yet ever-new beauty of the Lord, saying in her turn: "I have tasted you and now I hunger and thirst for you. You have touched me and now I burn with the desire to attain your peace." Affectionately,

*Sr. Anna Maria Parenzan*

Rome, 28 August 2023