

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

At about 6:45 p.m. today, the Feast of the Transfiguration, Jesus Master visited St. John of God Hospital, Pasay City, Philippines, to call to contemplate his glory for all eternity, our sister:

**VASQUEZ LUZVIMINDA – SR. MARIA TOMMASINA
born in Guinayangan (Quezon), Philippines, on 25 August 1937.**

Sr. Tommasina was an open and friendly person, attentive and sensitive, always smiling despite the difficulties she encountered in life and the problem of poor health. Her heart vibrated for the Pauline mission, and especially for Africa, where she worked for eighteen years, considering those to be among the best years of her life.

She entered the Congregation in the Queen of Apostles community in Pasay City on 10 June 1959 after graduating from high school and completing a training course as a business secretary. She made her novitiate in Lipa, which concluded with her first profession on 8 Dec. 1963. Five years later, she made her perpetual profession in Pasay City, reaffirming her yearning to be a *Pauline saint*. She then began an intense apostolic journey, first in the *Ut Unum Sint* offices in Pasay and soon after that as superior of the Dagupan community. After a brief time in the Quezon book center, she was appointed provincial councilor in 1975 and then reappointed for a second term. She wrote on that occasion to the Superior General: “It was not easy to accept this appointment because I am so afraid of the cross, but the Lord is good and merciful... He has given me a lot of light and courage, especially during the sessions of deeper reflection on the Pauline charism. Thank you for your trust in me, despite my poverty. He is the One who does all things.”

In 1982 Sr. Tommasina was appointed superior of the Cagayan de Oro community, and at the end of her three-year term she was sent as a missionary to Selangor, Malaysia. There, she carried out with wisdom and competence the services of bursar, bookkeeper and superior. In 1994, during the implementation of our Congregation’s Missionary Project, she indicated her availability to help re-open the FSP community of Lagos, Nigeria. She wrote to the Superior General: “The Lord has given me the beautiful grace of receiving a visa for Nigeria. I am so happy and grateful. My month-long sojourn with our sisters in Nairobi was very important. I am happy to have met such committed sisters, so full of apostolic enthusiasm...”

Sr. Tommasina remained in Lagos, Nigeria, for 12 years, where, despite her rather frail health due to a severe form of arthritis, she dedicated herself wholeheartedly to the book center apostolate, service in the bursar’s office, and itinerant diffusion. She was a true point of reference for the community’s young women in formation. In 2006, she readily accepted a transfer to Lusaka, Zambia, where she served as local superior for three years. As always, she dedicated herself generously to the various responsibilities asked of her, forever concerned to be a true Pauline witness and ever-attentive to the Institute’s collaborators and Cooperators, toward whom she felt a special solicitude. Love for the Pauline mission and charism, permeated by kindness and gentleness, were the distinctive features of our sister’s life and personality.

She had once said that she wanted to die in Africa, but in 2011 she asked to return to the Philippines while she could still be of help in her native province. And indeed, she was soon appointed superior of the Baguio community. About 8 years ago, she was sent to the circumscription’s novitiate house in Lipa, where she was happy to make a contribution to the formation community and also accompany the Pauline Cooperators. Last February she was diagnosed with brain cancer, which quickly spread to her other vital organs. And today, the Feast of the Transfiguration, it is wonderful to imagine Sr. Tommasina enveloped in the glow of Tabor, bathed in the light of Jesus’ resurrection (cf. Pope Francis at WYD). Affectionately,

Rome, 6 August 2023


Sr. Anna Maria Parenzan