

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

With deep emotion, we want to inform you that at 4:30 a.m. today (local time), our good Lord visited Holy Family Hospital in Mumbai, India, to call to glorify him forever in heaven, our sister:

UKKEN SR. CLARE
born in Arimpoor (Trichur), India, on 29 May 1948.

Sr. Clare was a simple, enthusiastic sister, passionate about the Pauline mission, and able to involve herself fully in every situation. A sociable person who easily made friends, she was blessed with many talents that she placed at the service of the apostolate, especially in the publishing field.

She entered the Congregation in the house in Mumbai on 12 June 1966 and soon had the opportunity to experience the itinerant apostolate by means of her visits to families and schools. In her early years in the Institute, she wrote: "I like propaganda because during that time we meet people personally, not only through books but also through our very contact with them, witnessing to Christ by means of good example."

After completing her initial formation and novitiate, Sr. Clare made her first profession in Mumbai on 8 September 1972. She finished her studies in 1977 and afterward was sent to the Amruthavani Social Communication Center in Secunderabad, where she carried out evangelization work. The following year she made her perpetual profession and was assigned to the publishing department in Mumbai. Later, in New Delhi, she served for a year in the Diocesan Community Center Library.

In 1981 Sr. Clare was asked by the superior general to join the small FSP community in Dar es Salaam, Tanzania. The Congregation's first "Pan African Encounter" had just taken place in which the priority of vocation ministry was assumed for the whole continent. In the light of this, Sr. Clare undertook the study of Swahili, while simultaneously working in the book center, in the vocation apostolate, and also serving as community superior.

In 1987, on the occasion of the Marian Year proclaimed by Pope John Paul II, she helped to produce the first audiocassette on the Virgin Mary on the African continent. The project was a great success and the cardinal himself declared that that music, which quickly reached every corner of the region, was a miracle of the Marian Year. Sr. Clare then encouraged the sisters to open a video library next door to the book center—another initiative that was greeted very favorably by everyone. She and the other sisters became very involved in large-scale production of audiocassettes for the dissemination of religious songs in parishes, schools and communities.

In 1990 Sr. Clare was called to the delegation house in Nairobi to serve as secretary, delegation councilor for formation, and also to take charge of the Junior professed sisters. During those years, serious family problems required her presence in India, but in a spirit of faith, Sr. Clare chose to remain where she was. She wrote to the superior general, "I suffer for my family but in the depths of my heart I am at peace because I realize that I am doing what the Lord wants of me and this gives me great joy."

Sr. Clare experienced a new intervention of God in her life in 1994, on the occasion of the Congregation's "Missionary Project." Along with several other FSPs, she was chosen to re-found our Pauline presence in the large archdiocese of Lagos, Nigeria. Enthusiastic about this new apostolic adventure, she was eager to be able to "give from her own poverty." She wrote to the superior general, "I am very conscious of my poverty of nature and preparation.... I am not specialized in any field, but in the spirit of the Pact I am ready to offer the little I have."

This new beginning was not easy for her, but her participation in it was deeply grounded in faith. As superior, she had the task and privilege of finding the most suitable place for the sisters to live, opening a book center, and constructing a formation house. She also had to determine the most appropriate ways to start the vocation ministry and welcome our first young Nigerian candidates. In the year 2000, she was transferred back to India but Africa would always remain in her heart.

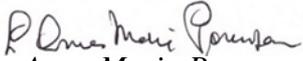
The following years continued to be demanding ones for Sr. Clare, filled with great responsibilities and commitments: from participation in the Congregation's 8th General Chapter to the coordination of the "Pauline Cooperators Association," which was taking its first steps; from service of the province for two consecutive terms as provincial councilor, to book center work in our Calcutta Center, followed by service as director of our Indian circumscription's Publishing House.

In the latter role, she manifested her great love for the Word of God by launching various projects, in particular one entitled *One Rupee a Day for the Gospel*. This highly-appreciated initiative was intended to encourage book center patrons to cooperate in the dissemination of the Bible among the poor and they participated in it wholeheartedly. Sr Clare also promoted our Indian edition of the New Testament of the New American Bible. She herself wrote 16 books, the last of which has not yet been published.

In 2014, Sr. Clare was appointed provincial superior. At the end of her term, she returned to Calcutta and then to Secunderabad, where she worked in the book center. In 2021 she was obliged to return to Mumbai for health reasons, but even then she continued to devote her time to proofreading, work at the reception desk, editorial activities, and increased prayer. Last year she had the joy of celebrating her golden jubilee of consecration to the Lord in a spirit of great thanksgiving to God, surrounded by her family and friends.

Sr. Clare made her last course of spiritual exercises in October 2022, writing in her personal notebook: *Surrender with joy in an attitude of gratitude*. This was probably her life project. She certainly never imagined that the Lord would be calling her very soon to surrender her life completely and joyfully into his hands. In fact, her definitive call to heaven came unexpectedly: a few days ago she experienced severe abdominal pain accompanied by gastrointestinal bleeding. Hospitalized for three days in the intensive care unit, she drew her last breath in the midst of all the preparations for Christmas, during which the Liturgy expresses in moving words the great mystery of the Incarnation and shines with great hope. For Sr. Clare, the long-awaited moment of the coming of her Savior had finally arrived and she went forth to meet him without fear.

Affectionately,


Sr. Anna Maria Parenzan

Rome, 19 December 2023