



Dearest Sisters,

On the Fifth Sunday of Easter, an unforgettable day marking the beginning of Pope Leo XIV's Petrine ministry, the Divine Master called our sister to Himself at 12:14 p.m. (local time) at St. John of God Hospital in Pasay City, Philippines:

AGUILLON EVANGELINA Sr. MARIA BERNARDINA
born in Palo Leyte, Philippines, on May 2, 1942

Sr. M. Bernardina was a humble, kind, and welcoming sister—loving, hardworking, simple, and young at heart. She embraced the Pauline mission with enthusiasm, courage, and deep affection. The sorrow of her mother's death when she was a child marked her entire life. She once confided that it was prayer and docility to her superiors that helped her face life's challenges. Her sisters attest that prayer was truly her source of strength. Even to the end of her life, her well-worn *prayer book*, creased from constant use, was always with her in her bag?

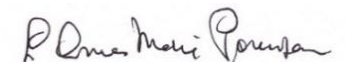
She entered the congregation at the Regina Apostolorum house in Pasay City on July 15, 1963. From the very beginning, Sr. M. Bernardina embraced the values of Pauline spirituality. She once shared, "With God's grace I faithfully make the examination of conscience, visit to the Blessed Sacrament, and meditation. I know that this helps me more and more to love my vocation." She also came to understand the importance of sincerity, which she understood as living each moment in God's presence.

After her initial formation, she entered the novitiate in Lipa and made her first profession of vows there on June 30, 1967. Shortly afterward, Sr. M. Bernardina was assigned to the Pasay community, where she dedicated herself to our itinerant mission, a form of apostolate that would shape much of her life. In cities such as Lipa, Cebu, Tacloban, Cagayan de Oro, and Iloilo, she confidently spread the Word of God among families, parishes, and communities. Alongside this mission, she generously offered her service wherever it was needed, especially in the kitchen, both in the community of Lipa and in the large community of Pasay City. She also served as local superior in Cebu and Lipa, carrying out her role with loving care. In Tacloban, she dedicated herself for several years to preparing religious programs for broadcast on the radio.

Sr. M. Bernardina considered the bookstore as the radiating center of all Pauline activities, as a place of encounter and for developing relationships. In the diffusion centers of Cebu, Davao, Zamboanga, Marikina-Manila she welcomed people of all ages and walks of life with her meek smile, making herself a wise companion for all. Her natural warmth and ease in relationships enabled her to manage mission fundraising for over a decade, nurturing benefactors through genuine closeness and friendship. Her amiability and sociability also fostered good relations with the personnel of the various civil offices to whom she would turn for the renewal of the sisters' documents. In her later years, despite frail health, she was happy to contribute to our mission, even by folding prayer leaflets with great precision.

On April 27, Sr. M. Bernardina was hospitalized due to chronic kidney disease and other serious health issues. After a week, she returned to the community, but three days ago a urinary tract infection required her to be readmitted to St. John of God Hospital, where she passed away suddenly today from cardiac arrest. We believe that Sr. Bernardina went to meet the living Christ, prepared like a bride adorned for her bridegroom, with the Easter Alleluia in her heart—a song of blessing and praise that, on this Fifth Sunday of Easter, rises from the whole earth to the One who makes all things new.

Affectionately,


Sr. Anna Maria Parenzan

Rome, May 18, 2025