

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

At 7:30 this morning, God the Father visited the infirmary of our Alba community to call to eternal intimacy with himself our sister:

PANARO GIULIA ROSA – SR. M. ERNESTA
born in Castelletto d’Erro (Alessandria), Italy on 23 April 1916.

Sr. Ernesta suffered a severe paralysis about six years ago, but she continued to express her profound desire for communion with others through her radiant smile and also through the way in which she used the only hand with some mobility left in it to affectionately squeeze the hands of her sisters and caregivers as a sign of her gratitude toward them for assisting her with such tenderness and love.

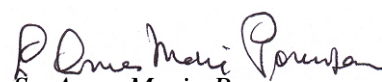
She entered the Congregation in Alba on 30 Nov. 1936, paving the way for her sister, Sr. Bianca, who would follow in her footsteps 10 years later, and also for her nephew Aldo, who joined the Society of St. Paul. Sr. Ernesta was a simple and sociable sister, who dedicated all her energies to the Pauline mission. After her entrance, she was assigned to the large sewing room in Alba and later was sent to Udine to carry out propaganda to families and collectivities. She made her novitiate in Rome, concluding it with her first profession on 19 March 1941. She spent the following years in the communities of Foggia and Venice, selflessly bearing the great sacrifices required to carry out the propaganda mission under the hardships engendered by World War II.

After her perpetual profession on 19 March 1946, Sr. Ernesta was sent to Marseilles, France, where she continued to carry out the diffusion apostolate. The country would remain forever in her heart: she was proud to have learned the French language and even years later would enthusiastically sing the many French hymns she had learned during her years there. In 1960, Sr. Ernesta returned to Rome, where she carried out various services in the local communities, viewing these assignments as opportunities to improve her skills in carrying out the Pauline mission. She wrote: “I try to do my best in every situation and I make the effort to keep abreast of everything.”

In 1963, she was assigned to the St. Paul Film Agency in Rome and afterward to the Agencies in Reggio Emilia and Verona successively. In all three places, she dedicated her days to double-checking the films that were returned from the parishes. She was very happy to carry out this and any other service asked of her. In 1969, she confided to her superior: “I am happy with my life and I thank the Lord for calling me among the Daughters of St. Paul. I love the Congregation very much and feel the responsibility to do everything I can for it. However, I would really like to have more contact with people, to be in an office in which there is more collaboration among us, so that we all feel like daughters of the same family, working for the same ideal. I’ve always wished I could have studied more so as to carry out the apostolate better. I’ve never lost an opportunity to gain more education, but unfortunately opportunities for higher study have been few and far between for me. I speak French and a little English. I would really like to learn to type. I feel that the more I learn, the more useful I can be.”

In 1993, Sr. Ernesta’s declining health made it necessary to transfer her to the infirmary of Alba, where she was deeply loved by everyone for her simple and joyful spirit. About 6 years ago, she was struck by a severe paralysis that deprived her of mobility and speech. Only her luminous eyes were left to speak for her and they did this eloquently, radiating her love, self-surrender, tenderness and gratitude to everyone. She passed to eternal life with her gaze fixed on the medal of the Institute, worn by the sister assisting her. We are sure that this emblem, which she herself had worn with great love throughout her life as a Pauline, evoked thoughts of the Gospel she had disseminated so abundantly over the years and also reminded her of the Congregation to which she had dedicated her entire being, day after day, for more than 75 years.

Our sincere and loving thanks to Sr. Ernesta and to the many other sisters who have left us in this time to enrich the Pauline Family in heaven.


Sr. Anna Maria Parenzan
Vicar General

Rome, 27 August 2011