

ISTITUTO PIA SOCIETÀ
FIGLIE DI S. PAOLO
CASA GENERALIZIA
Via S. Giovanni Eudes, 25
00163 Roma
Tel. 06.661 3039 - Fax 06.661 57 208



Dearest Sisters,

We received the news that at 5:55 a.m. today (local time) God, our good Father, visited the Catholic Marian Long-Term Care Center in Taipei, Taiwan, to call to live with him in the new heavenly Jerusalem our sister:

HIRAI MITSUKO – SR. MARIA AURORA
born in Nagano, Japan, on 22 December 1929.

Sr. Aurora was an extraordinary Pauline missionary who spread in our FSP communities and among the people of Taiwan (the nation in which she lived for almost fifty years), her deep faith and great joy of belonging totally to the Lord by spending herself for the good of everyone. Her warm and gentle smile won over the people with whom she came in contact and aroused great admiration in the sisters. A message written by Maestra Thecla on a page in one of Sr. Aurora's notebooks provided her with great inspiration: "Have great trust in God and in Mary Most Holy," Prima Maestra wrote. "They will obtain for you the grace to acquire the charity you desire. Do everything always and only for God and for souls."

Sr. Aurora's very adventurous childhood inspired her to eventually write a book for children. When she was still very young, her family migrated from Japan to China, but then war broke out between the two countries. All Sr. Aurora's relatives were killed and she suddenly found herself alone. Through the providence of God, she managed to leave China on the last ship taking the country's Japanese citizens back home. But it was a great sorrow for her to leave the local family that had provided her with so much comfort and support during that period. Although the war had killed all her loved ones, Sr. Aurora wound up offering her whole life for China.

She initially thought about becoming a Buddhist nun in order to pray for her deceased loved ones, but after learning about Christianity and receiving baptism she entered the Congregation of the Daughters of St. Paul in Osaka, Japan on 6 February 1952. She made her initial formation and novitiate in Tokyo, concluding this stage of her Pauline life with her first profession 30 June 1955. As a young professed she devoted herself to the diffusion apostolate in the dioceses of Tokyo and Nagasaki. In the latter community and also in Kagoshima, she served as local superior.

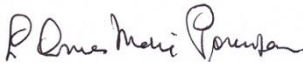
In 1974 Sr. Aurora was assigned to Taiwan—a mission she willingly accepted as a call from her Bridegroom. In Taipei, she worked in the book center and also in the diffusion and radio sectors. She also served for several terms as delegation bursar and local bursar. In Taipei and Kaohsiung, she was a beloved superior. Her eyes sparkled when she approached people, offering them Pauline publications and asking them about their lives. Her greatest joy was talking to everyone about Jesus, the great love of her life. In the community, she was a sunny-natured and hard-working person who focused on essentials. She was always concerned about the growth of the sisters and ever-ready to offer them her support. The secret of her ability to give herself to others continually lay in her intimate relationship with Jesus. She said that the Eucharistic Celebration was the center of her whole day: during the Mass she placed her entire being in the chalice, offering herself along with Jesus for priests, for the Congregation and for vocations.

When she was in her nineties, Sr. Aurora was asked if she wanted to return to her native land, and without hesitation she said that she would prefer to remain in Taiwan so as to be close to Sr. Lauretana, another Japanese sister who was also very old and in need of ongoing assistance. It was touching to see the tender care she lavished on this sister, remaining an inseparable presence at her side.

Sr. Aurora had once confided that her sole desire was to reach heaven. That long-awaited moment arrived for her after eleven months spent in an assisted living community, to which she had been transferred after a bad fall led to the development of brain hematoma that prevented her from managing her life independently. Sr. Aurora was admitted to the facility in December 2021. Lovingly assisted by her community, she drew her last breath there today. "Like the bride adorned for her Bridegroom" in today's Liturgy, she now joyfully participates in "the new heaven and the new earth" of the heavenly Jerusalem.

Affectionately,

Rome, 25 November 2022


Sr. Anna Maria Parenzan