



Dearest sisters,

at 1:15 p.m. on the 12th Sunday of Ordinary Time in the community of Albano, the Divine Master gently called one of our sisters to *pass to the other shore*, the shore of peace and joy:

GRILLO FRANCESCA SR MARIA PROVVIDENZA
born in Terrasini (Palermo) on January 3, 1935

Sr. M. Provvidenza often proudly recalled her Sicilian origins, her large and beautiful family, and her departure from Terrasini to enter the community in Rome as a postulant on February 11, 1960. She recalled her first profession, made in Rome on June 30, 1963, after devoting herself for some time to the itinerant spreading of the Gospel in the dioceses of Rome and Palermo. Above all, she recalled the sixteen years spent in the United States, her friendship with “Maestra Paula”, and the time she spent spreading the Gospel message in offices and communities in the dioceses of Bridgeport, Buffalo, San Diego, Philadelphia, and Cleveland. She remembered the years spent as a cook, first in Boston (USA) and then, from 1981 to 2003, in Albano, serving the sick in the *Regina Apostolorum* Hospital and the many sisters in the community. For over twenty years, she committed herself there, where, with the help of other sisters and staff, she was called upon to prepare meals for over four hundred people. Small in stature, she skillfully maneuvered the large pots and urged everyone to be quick. But her gaze swept over the world she had come to know in her many travels. In 1993, during the “Missionary Project”, she offered to go to one of the new foundations. When she realized this was not possible, she asked the superior general to entrust her with a nation for which to pray and offer sacrifices. She always carried among the dearest intentions of her heart the small community in Bucharest, Romania.

In 2003, she gladly accepted the invitation to join the formation team in Nairobi (Kenya) and initiate African novices in the culinary arts and other domestic skills. She spent three very intense years in Africa, where she knew how to make herself young with the young women, committing herself to instilling those in formation with the richness of her Pauline experience, her love for Fr. Alberione, M. Thecla, and above all the universal vision of the congregation. In 2006, she returned to Albano to continue briskly walking the long corridors of the house and giving of herself by serving in many small ways. Seven years ago, because of deteriorating health, she was welcomed into the infirmary of the community. Witty and very personable, she knew how to make her voice heard, especially when someone passed her room without greeting her. In keeping with her quick-witted and matter-of-fact style, she managed to overcome a fractured femur in 2019 without undergoing surgery. In fact, she would be seen running with her walker, reminding everyone of the great things the Lord had done for her throughout her long and beautiful Pauline life. With just a little pride, she would boast of the *seven* passports that had allowed her to exercise her Pauline apostolate on the various continents. And especially in her later years, she expressed a burning desire for the final passport that would open heaven’s gates for her. It consoled her and gave her great joy to know that although far away, her brothers accompanied her with such love and benevolence. And so, for her funeral, she had expressed only one wish: a bouquet of white roses representing all her loved ones.

The Lord’s visit came suddenly, even though her physical condition had been causing concern for some time. As she was finishing lunch, she was issued that last passport: to eternal life. Entrusting this dear sister to the Father’s mercy, we give thanks that in her life, she sought to realize the great aspiration of her first profession: *to be in the hands of her superiors like Baby Jesus in the hands of Our Lady, to grow like Him and with Him...*

Love.


sr Anna Maria Provenza

Rome, June 23, 2024