



Dearest sisters,

In the St. Paul community in Tokyo (Japan), at 12:03 p.m. local time, one of our sisters suddenly passed away:

**OIWA KAZUMI Sr. M. THECLA**  
**born in Ajchi-Ken (Nagoya, Japan) on March 11, 1938**

While the community was engaged in the meeting to review the province's journey in view of the upcoming General Chapter, Sr. M. Thecla fell ill: she dropped the paper on which she had written her reflections and collapsed, unconscious. The emergency care she immediately received at a nearby hospital was of no avail. On the eve of the Solemnity of Jesus, the Divine Master, she was already contemplating her Lord. Some time ago, she had expressed to a sister her wish to die while carrying out the apostolate, like the Apostle Paul. And the Lord granted her this desire. Sr. M. Thecla, too, having fought the good fight, had now finished the race and was ready to receive the prize (cf. 2 Tim. 4:7).

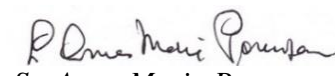
Sr. M. Thecla discovered the beauty of the Christian life as a young adult. In fact, she was twenty-five years old when she was baptized in 1963. She soon realized that the Lord was calling her to total self-giving in the Pauline life. She entered the congregation in the community of Nagoya on January 23, 1965, where, after a few months, she received the sacrament of confirmation. Sr. M. Thecla made her novitiate in Tokyo and made her first profession there on June 30, 1969. As a young professed she devoted herself to the itinerant spreading of the Gospel and served in the book center. And after her perpetual profession, in 1976, she became the editor-in-chief of the well-known magazine *Akebono*. With patience, foresight, tenacity and incomparable dedication, she developed the magazine and increased its prestige by inviting famous authors to write for it. *Akebono*, which means 'Dawn,' was truly her great passion—a special place for sharing and communicating the Gospel, particularly with women.

In 1989, Sr. M. Thecla had the opportunity for an extended stay at the Generalate to study Italian. Learning a new language was not an easy undertaking for her, but she was not afraid to make this sacrifice to be of help to the sisters. Upon her return to Japan in 1991, she devoted herself to translation work in the Hiratsuka community for a few years followed by serving as the superior of the Sapporo community.

Sr. M. Thecla was assigned as a book editor in 2002 and worked tirelessly to cultivate and choose the best authors. She embraced her role to contact authors and obtain manuscripts, often leaving home early in the morning after the Hour of Adoration and returning late in the evening. Authors were captivated by her simplicity and exceptional interpersonal skills. Sr. M. Thecla was truly a sister of many talents. She had earned a degree in music before entering and willingly played the organ in community to make liturgical celebrations more solemn. She never assumed attitudes of superiority. She loved small and simple things; she was convinced that every small thing accomplished for her brothers and sisters was done directly to God (cf. Mt. 25:40).

She wisely cultivated our Pauline spirituality and in 2010 Sr. M. Thecla joyfully participated in the month-long spiritual exercises on the spiritual-apostolic text *Donec Formetur*. May she who now lives in God, obtain for us the grace to manifest and radiate the Divine Master who dwells in us, so as to bear witness to the joy of the Gospel.

Affectionately,

  
Sr. Anna Maria Parenzan

Rome, October 26, 2024