



Dearest Sisters,

At the break of dawn, at 4 a.m. (local time), in the community of Mexico–Capri, the Divine Master called our sister to live forever in the joy of his intimacy:

FRANCO ARAGON HERIBERTA Sr. MARIA PAULA
born in Santa Maria Ecatepec (Tehuantepec, Mexico) on March 27, 1931

Sr. Maria Paula was the first Mexican Daughter of St. Paul. She entered the congregation on November 15, 1948, six months after the arrival of the missionaries who, with such trepidation, had started the foundation in that vast and populous nation. Her vocation was indeed the fruit of the apostolic enthusiasm of those fervent sisters who, without knowing the language, went into the countryside and villages, already rich in a thousand-year-old culture, to bring the Gospel of Jesus. Littleness was characteristic of Sr. M. Paula, who was a very friendly and communicative person. She had received a deep faith and the gift of an intense capacity to love from her large family of ten children.

Sr. M. Paula made her novitiate in Rome and it was there that she made her first profession on March 19, 1952, in the presence of Fr. Alberione and Maestra Thecla - as Sr. M. Paula often recalled with a touch of pride and much nostalgia. Upon returning to Mexico, she collaborated in founding the house in Monterrey, where she returned several times over the years in her commitment to spreading the Gospel in factories, schools, and parishes. Sr. M. Paula also served the community in Monterrey as superior for two terms.


She had the joy of devoting herself to the busy bookcenter in Puebla at different times for about ten years. The words uttered by the local bishop in the early days of the Pauline presence in that diocese remain memorable: “I am very pleased with the work the Pauline Sisters; they are like doves that enter into every place without making a lot of noise and always remaining true to who they are.”

The care and apostolic attention of *Sr. Paulita*, as she was affectionately called, did not go unnoticed. Even today, people remember her bright gaze and wise words filled with the wisdom of the Gospel. In her beautiful and simple life, Sr. M. Paula had the opportunity to contribute to the apostolic and vocational development of all our Mexican communities, from Tijuana to León, from Puebla to Guadalajara to Ciudad Juarez. She also had the opportunity to give valuable help not only in the bookcenters and through itinerant outreach but also in the bindery, warehouse, and in the production of audiovisuals, especially audiocassettes.

Sr. M. Paula was a friendly, cheerful presence, fond of the first sisters with whom she had shared the years of her youth and maturity. In 2022, she celebrated the 70th anniversary of her profession with joy and much gratitude. On that occasion, she thanked the Lord profoundly, who had always guided her in a loving and total commitment. In recent years, she continued to serve at the reception desk in the large house in Mexico–Capri.

A few months ago, she underwent hip surgery, which was successful. However, other complications set in that gradually weakened her, and slowly ushered her into the banquet of spousal intimacy, where death is banished forever, every tear is wiped away, and the soul rejoices in salvation.

Affectionately,


Sr. Anna Maria Parenzan

Rome, December 5, 2024