



Dear Sisters,

Today, March 31, 2016, at 9:45 AM (local time), at the *Nuestra Señora de América* Hospital, Madrid (Spain), the Lord called to eternal life our sister,

**SR. M. AMALIA VILLA GARCÍA**

born on June 27, 1939, in Santibáñez de Porma (León - Spain).

Amalia, an open and promising young woman, entered the Congregation in Bilbao on June 27, 1951, on her sixteenth birthday. Our community in Bilbao was founded on October 28, 1943, thus the community of the Sister Disciples was still in its initial period. What made this adolescent fall in love and decide to leave everything to follow Jesus Master among his disciples?

After a few years of integration in the Institute and initial formation in Spain, she went to Italy for the novitiate, which concluded with the religious profession in Rome on March 25, 1958. Sr. M. Amalia was sent to the Saint Paul House first in Rome and then in Catania, where she lovingly served in the priestly apostolate. She made her perpetual profession in Rome on March 25, 1963. In her request for admission to the various stages of consecrated life, there is an expression which is often repeated: *“I am content and desire to persevere until the end”*. Perseverance is a gift which she certainly requested of the Divine Master. Despite the various difficulties encountered in the consecrated life – in many parts of the world as well as in Spain – she matured the decision that would orient her entire life and enable her to overcome all trials and difficulties.

The sisters in Spain wrote: *“She lived her vocation and mission as a Sister Disciple, in our communities and in the priestly service in the various communities of Italy and Spain, with generosity and joy.”* She lived in the communities of: Madrid, Bilbao, Barcelona, spending most of her time in the workroom preparing vestments. For some periods she offered her service in the community of the Society of Saint Paul: Zalla in 1964, Madrid in 1978.

About ten years ago she was diagnosed with advanced breast cancer that had already spread to the spinal column. She received the necessary treatments of radiation and chemotherapy, which enabled her to deal with the disease with tranquility.

During these final days, our sister M. Amalia lived in extraordinary association with the Paschal Mystery of Jesus Master. The sisters in Spain testify: *“On the evening of Holy Thursday, in the hour in which Jesus was betrayed, a time and day of great significance for us as Sister Disciples, as the community returned from the celebration of the “Lord’s Supper”, the doctor was called urgently because Sr. M. Amalia was very sick”*. It was necessary to bring her to the hospital, where she was admitted. *“Besides entering on the night in which Jesus was consigned, we can say that she became like the Living Christ, like the Servant of Yahweh, covered with wounds, especially in the back...with indescribable pain, even though this was eased by therapy. More than once Sr. M. Amalia said that she offered everything to God, to the merciful Christ, for our communities”*. In the completion of her earthly pilgrimage she experienced an extraordinary closeness and charity from the sisters.

Sr. M. Amalia had the privilege of being called by the Divine Master during this Octave of Easter, a time that is precious to us for our special mission in proclaiming the Resurrection. In her simplicity, she was a disciple totally conquered by her spouse, Jesus, and capable of radiating and communicating to others that she had encountered the Risen Lord: he filled her life with joy and hope.

Sr. M. Amalia, because of your great love for Jesus Master, we entrust to you the intercession for the needs of our religious family, and we especially entrust to you the young people, asking for new vocations and their perseverance in Spain and in Europe!

*S. H. Paolo Mancini*