



Dear Sisters,

Today, December 11, 2013, at 1:15 PM, in the “Emile-ROUX” hospital (Limeil-Brévannes) near our community of Nogent Sur Marne (France), the Lord called our sister

**Sr. M. Paolina Maria Zocchio,
born at Zocchio di Vallarsa (Trento) on September 24, 1921.**

Having lost both parents at a very early age, she and her sister, Lucienne, left the majestic Atensine Alps of the Province of Trento in 1933 and immigrated to France - her adopted country which would always be very dear to her. She was welcomed by an aunt. Later she came to know the Sister Disciples of the Divine Master and entered at the community in Vincennes, near Paris, on January 24, 1942, fully conscious of the gift of herself that she intended to offer to the Divine Master. Due to the specific social situation of that historical period, she made her novitiate in Vincennes from March 24, 1944, to March 25, 1945, the date of her religious profession, which took place in the new location of the Sister Disciples at Nogent Sur Marne.

From 1947 to 1949, she was in Sanfré for medical treatment. On March 25, 1950, she made her perpetual profession in Alba. In her request for admission to perpetual vows, she expressed herself in this manner: *“I, poor Sr. Maria Paolina, humbly ask to be admitted to the perpetual profession. I feel my unworthiness and weakness, but I hope that Jesus, who has already shown me many expressions of his mercy for my soul, will pardon my negligence and weakness and grant me the grace to sanctify myself through the total offering and absolute fidelity to all the responsibilities inherent to my vocation”* (Nogent Sur Marne, February 5, 1950). This awareness of the goodness of God and of her limitations was already expressed in her request for admission to the biennial vows: *“How good Jesus has been to me. He has been better than a mother and I wish to confide that, in his goodness, he pardons all my coldness and negligence, and gives me the grace to live with ever greater fervor and total offering within his house”* (Sanfré, March 15, 1948).

She fulfilled various apostolates in France: from propaganda, to the kitchen, to the Liturgical Apostolate Center – where she could creatively express her conspicuous love for art by collaborating with French artists. She was then entrusted with the accounting for both the community and the liturgical apostolate center. She carried out this ministry for many years, always with responsibility and precision. When the time came for a transfer, she expressed herself in this way: *“I am grateful for the office you had entrusted to me, which I sought to fulfill to the best of my ability by the grace of God. I have passed this on not only voluntarily, but also with gratitude to God since I no longer have the strength to carry it out as I approach 74 years of age. Therefore, I give lively gratitude to the Master for having sent a sister to take “la relève”! He knows how much I desire the development of our mission as Sister Disciples in France, especially the insertion and growth of vocations...which makes me experience even more my lack of virtue and my poverty”* (to Sr. M. Paola Mancini, July 13, 1995). Sr. M. Paolina lived that evangelical spirit characterized by joy, humility, consciousness of her limitations – which was repeatedly expressed, but these were always united with hope and confidence that the Divine Master would satisfy her good desires for her beloved Congregation. She always demonstrated a great love for the

Congregation and for vocations, for which she felt an apostolic anxiety. Personally she always *sought ever greater dedication to her beloved and beautiful vocation*. In this final period of her life, dedicated primarily to prayer – and with the rosary always in her hands! – she experienced the concern of her sisters in Nogent. Her response was always “*mercy, thank you!*” and a beautiful smile. About 15 days ago she fractured her femur. She fell as she turned to receive Holy Communion. She was still holding the Host in her hand and protected it jealously until she was able to consume it as soon as she was assisted. Following the surgical intervention at the “Armand Brillart” hospital in Nogent Sur Marne, she was transferred to the “Emile-ROUX” hospital for rehabilitation. Two days after her arrival, the Bridegroom arrived for the eternal wedding feast. Sr. M. Paolina, you are witness to the difficult story of our presence as Sister Disciples in France. Together with Venerable Mother M. Scholastica, obtain the gift of new evangelical freshness of the charism for all the sisters present in France, that they may be a sign and reminder to the young people of France who are seeking interior life and Beauty!

Sr. M. Paola Mancini
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