



Dear Sisters,

Today, February 6, 2023, Memorial of St. Paul Miki and Companions, at the Sobu Hospital of Tokyo, at 2:40 AM (local time), the Lord called to eternity our sister,

**SR. M. SCOLASTICA – MARIA MISANO YAMANO
born on October 31, 1926 in Hirado (Nagasaki) Japan.**

On November 3, 1926, she was baptized in her parish church and received the Christian name of Maria. Her profoundly Christian family consisted of 12 brothers and sisters (four of whom died at an early age) and her parents, Michele and Maria. Maria Misano was the eldest and a great help for her family, yet she fostered the desire for a total consecration to the Lord, for which she obtained the benevolent consent of her parents.

Maria Misano Yamano, before the foundation of the Pious Disciples of the Divine Master in Japan, was invited by her uncle, disciple, Br. Paolo Yamano, SSP, to go from Nagasaki to Fukuoka to offer service at the Society of St. Paul, which had a house and bookstore near the Cathedral of Fukuoka. In the meantime, they were awaiting the arrival of the Pious Disciples who were introduced to her. The Pious Disciples arrived in Japan on May 2, 1950, but her entrance into the Congregation is listed before, on September 28, 1949. Thus, Sr. M. Scolastica Yamano, considered the first Japanese aspirant, is one of the unforgettable sisters and pioneers who brought the apostolate in the foundational years of the Congregation in Japan. With the arrival of the Pious Disciples, she began her regular journey of formation, entering the novitiate in Kawaguchi, near Tokyo, on May 4, 1953, and making her first profession in Kawaguchi, on May 5, 1954. She made her perpetual profession in Tokyo DM on May 5, 1954. In her requests for the various stages she added: *with firm and free will*. In the reports by the sisters in charge, she is presented as a person who is *positive, simple, prayerful, trustworthy and very generous*.

Over time she would be followed in her journey as a disciple by her sisters: Sr. M. Bernardetta Yamano (1955), Sr. M. Immacolata Yamano (1962) and Sr. M. Benedicta Yamano (1963) for whom, as sisters, they walked together in unity and joy following the Divine Master.

During 1963-1964 she obtained a diploma in culinary arts, which facilitated the service she offered for many years as a cook, partially in the DM houses, but especially in the Pauline houses in Fukuoka and Tokyo. During some periods she also had tasks for coordination (Local Superior in Fukuoka San Paolo 1970) or as Local Councilor in 1981 and in 1996. In 2002

she went to the DM House in Tokyo for various ministries. With the simplicity of the little ones in the Gospel, she also communicated something of her ordinary life. She wrote to the undersigned (Superior General at the time): *«I am very grateful for all that you do for Japan. I would like to let you know that I have finally decided to use the hearing aid. I did not want to use it since I am now elderly, it is expensive, but I am grateful to adhere to the advice of my superiors. For my part, I continue to serve the Congregation in everything»* (Tokyo, September 21, 2002).

She was willing to help in the kitchen even at an advanced age; she was always positive and generous. Throughout her life she loved the priestly ministry, where she was appreciated as a mother and heartfelt support. Sustained by the word of the Founder, she looked to the Virgin Mary who raised Jesus; she felt the responsibility, the mission of collaborating in the formation of the young, to care for them. She was affectionately called "mamma" by the priests and the disciples of the Society of St. Paul. She herself said: *«Near the priests, the disciples and the seminarians, I loved and carried out with pleasure my hidden activities, like the Virgin Mary who was always with Jesus. Happily I cared for them and watched over them, as a mother watches over and nurtures her sons. I spoke words that were kind and encouraging to the young in formation who had vocational problems or needed help. My daily offering was always for them»*.

She was peacefully carrying out her last service for priests, in silence, when in May of 2022, she was suffering and it became clear that it was something serious. In fact, she was suffering from lung cancer. She spent her last days in the hospital of Jinwakai, where she was treated, and then transferred to the hospital of Sobu. She hoped to return to the community for February 10, her feast day and the feast day of the Congregation, but in the early hours of February 6, 2023, she was called to the definitive encounter with the Father and with her beloved Jesus Master.

Sr. M. Scolastica Yamano, the first Japanese aspirant, is one of those unforgettable sisters, always smiling. She continued to pray for the priests and brothers of the Society of St. Paul, even in advanced age. Her example of service and of prayer showed us the splendor of the consecrated life, the hope and the joy of eternal life in our hearts (*the Sisters of Japan*).

Sr. M. Scolastica, invited to the Heavenly banquet, we invoke for you endless joy and we entrust to you the Pauline Family in the vast Orient, and especially in Japan, a great challenge for our mission!

Sr. H. Paolo Hauviri