



Dear Sisters,

On Wednesday, April 23, 2025, at 11:30 PM, Jesus, the Master and Lord of Life, definitively called to himself our sister

SR. M. GIANFRANCA – MARIA RULFO
born on August 7, 1933, in Centallo CN (Italy).

Baptized on August 10, 1933, Maria, lost her mother at two years of age. Her maternal aunt cared for her and her younger brother, raising them as her adoptive children.

At only 12 years of age, on July 28, 1945, she entered the Congregation at Alba, in Casa Madre, attracted by the charismatic figure of Fr. Alberione. It was a phenomenon that, at the time – during the years of World War II – involved various members of her age group from S. Lorenzo, the birthplace of our Founder. She undertook the formative journey of religious life and, at the conclusion of the novitiate, she made her religious profession on March 25, 1951, in the chapel of Casa Madre in Alba. Five years later, on March 25, 1956, she made her perpetual profession in Rome.

A period of physical suffering awaited her (1956 – 1958) which she spent in Albano Laziale at the “Casa di Cura – Regina Apostolorum”. It was a time of trial and purification from which she emerged strengthened and motivated, sustained also by the words of the Founder: *“Through the suffering offered to the Divine Master in the Spirit of the Pious Disciple, you do the most good for the Congregation; it is the most fruitful time. I bless you! M. Alberione”* (Christmas 1956).

Upon regaining her health, she departed as a missionary for England, where she served in Langley at a community of the Society of St. Paul (1958 – 1962) and then at Ballykeeran – Athlone in Ireland (1962 – 1965), where she organized the service to the Pauline community as local superior.

After her return to Italy, she was sent as a missionary to the Far East. On July 24, 1965, with some other sisters and Pauline priests, she boarded a ship at Brindisi bound for Manila in the Philippines. Upon their arrival in Antipolo on September 1, they found a community that was fervorous in the Pauline vocation and mission. She remained as a missionary in this country until 2003 when, upon her return to Italy for the Beatification of our Founder, she was involved in a serious automobile accident that was life-threatening.



She spent the years with the Sister Disciples in the Church in the Philippines in joy and dedication. She immediately manifested a spirit of adaptability, growing in affection for the people, its cultural characteristics and religious traditions, enculturating the specific vocation of the Sister Disciple. She served in various roles of governance – local superior, regional secretary, regional councilor – in preparation for the canonical transition from a Region to a Province, and fostered the missionary expansion.

For many years, she was the formator for the younger generations: aspirants, postulants, juniors. She was appreciated and respected for her religious spirit and specific charismatic identity. Before her advice, it was the example of her life that rendered her instruction and formation to the younger members credible and authentic. Versatile and flexible in all of the expressions of the Eucharistic, priestly and liturgical apostolate, she was capable of lovingly and patiently guiding toward the choice of the gospel and charismatic values the sisters and lay collaborators of the Province of the Philippines-Taiwan-Hong Kong, which is in constant growth and development.

After surviving a serious automobile accident, she was convinced that she would be able to return to her previous service in Antipolo, but her missionary dream took on another dimension. It was not as vast geographically, but deeper on a personal level. Not without difficulty, she remained in the community of Sanfrè, where she was able to convert her energy for the good of the sisters, the community and benefactors as an apostolate of prayer and suffering, in fidelity to the Eucharistic adoration and daily charity. She never lost the joy of service in the small details that life offers each day.

On the occasion of her 70th anniversary of religious profession, with a grateful heart, she wrote: *«44 years in mission and 26 in Italy! Now all that remains is to live serenely this season of my life, preparing myself as well as possible for the arrival of the Bridegroom»* (13-12-2021).

15 days ago, Sr. M. Gianfranca suffered a stroke, with its consequences. In the last few days, after a brief recovery, her situation deteriorated rapidly until her death, at which time she was surrounded by the prayer and care of the community.

We can summarize her memorial in a few words: Everyone remembers her as a dear sister who, until the end, was present and involved in the community, always available to assist in any possible service.

To Sr. M. Gianfranca, who is now part of the large Pauline community in Heaven, we entrust our Congregation, those in formation, and especially the missionary dream Fr. Alberione had for the Philippines: that it might be a bridge for the evangelization of the other Eastern Nations in which the Pauline Family is not yet established. To her, and her missionary heart, we ask her intercession that this dream may soon become a reality.

Rome, April 25, 2025

Sr. M. Micaela Monetti
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