



*"Faith in the resurrection  
opens us to fraternal communion  
beyond the threshold of faith ..."  
(RoL 24)*



Today, 16 September 2019 at 6.50 (local time)

In the community Casa São José – San Paolo (Brazil),

our sister **MARTHA ISABEL SR MARIA HELENA DE FARIA**

returned to the Father's house.

She was 86 years old and 61 of religious life

*Come then, let us bow down and worship, bending the knee before the Lord, our maker. For he is our God and we are his people, the flock he shepherds.* With these words of Psalm 95, we entrust to the mercy of the Father our sister Martha who today had listened to the voice of the Shepherd and has led her to the pastures of Life Eternal.

Martha was born on 23 November 1932 in Alpinópolis / MG (Brazil); she comes from a large family, sixth of thirteen children. She was baptized in her hometown on 2 December 1932.

She entered the Congregation on 21 January 1951 in San Paolo and in the Novitiate at Caxias do Sul / RS on 1 February 1957. She made her first profession on 2 February 1958 receiving the name of Sr Maria Helena; and on 2 February 1963 the perpetual profession.

Sr. Martha carried out the pastoral apostolate in various places in Brazil: 1958 - Cidade Vargas, Jabaquara (São Paulo / SP); 1968 Jardim Gilda Maria / SP; 1979 Regente Feijó / SP; 1980 Iepê / SP; 1986 Rio Maria / PA; 1988 Community of Maria Mãe do Bom Pastor in Jardim Gilda Maria / SP; at the beginning of 2019 due to the deterioration of her health we find her in the community of São José / SP

Sr. Martha, due to a lung problem, had always poor health, but nevertheless she never gave up. She has proved tireless to help build the house in Caxias do Sul and the building in San Paolo. Until recently, with fidelity, as long as she could move independently, she maintained relations with benefactors, many of whom are now elderly, visiting them with gratitude and accompanying them with prayer; with the loss of strength she made only a few visits of friendship. She has always cultivated particular attention towards the poorest and the vulnerable, and in what she could she tried to help them in everything. Thus demonstrating a lifestyle capable of donating and offering herself very strongly.

Sr. Martha, although ill, did not complain about the pain she suffered, but lived the illness with serenity as well as her passage to eternity, accompanied by the sisters of the community.

We publish a testimony of Sr. Martha on her vocation as Pastorella and as a member of the Pauline Family:

*Through this story, I want to express the desire expressed by our Founder, Giacomo Alberione. In 1951, when I decided to be a Pastorella Sister, many people told me not to enter the convent, because I would have suffered a lot. My thoughts were directed to Jesus Good Shepherd, who gave his life to save people and I heard a strong voice that told me: "Don't be afraid, I'll be with you". Starting from that moment I felt strength and I said: I want to fight, even to suffer if necessary and to give my life like Jesus to save people. It is what I want!*

*When I saw Fr. Alberione for the first time, he said to me: "I am glad of your availability, because while you were still in your family you have offered your life to Jesus, even if it were necessary to die like Him to save people. Is it not true? Now go ahead; don't be afraid of the beginning of the Congregation.*

*Always say like Saint Paul: "Your Grace is enough Lord " and you will see how many beautiful things will happen ".*

*When he came the second time, we already lived in the house at Jabaquara and it was a difficult time for beneficence. And he said to me: "I know that going out for charity is not easy, but you see ... this work is of God and He will give you the strength to overcome the difficulties and to always advance with faith. Here will be a pole for many families who will be educated not only in morality, in intellect, but spiritually; that life may be filled with God and his Kingdom may spread. This is the will of the Father and mine ". And he said again: "Work a lot for vocations; they are the future, tomorrow. Always live like Jesus Good Shepherd, He together with Mary, St. Peter, St. Paul and St. Joseph always bless you. Do not be discouraged, go forward with faith, hope and love".*

*Third coming: I had spent a good time with vocational work, but at that time I was at rest due to a pulmonary effusion. We were twelve sisters at the time he arrived; we surrounded him and he asked everyone what each one did and Mother Eugenia translated into Italian. When it came to me, Mother Eugenia said, "She is resting because of a pulmonary effusion." He put his hands together and lowered his head for a few seconds and then said to me: "You have worked a lot for vocations, now go on, forward with faith, the Lord blesses you".*

*Fourth coming: Don Alberione came for the inauguration of the Chapel of Caxias do Sul. I was very happy to have been able to help with the construction of the house and the Chapel. He said to me, "You are very happy because you worked here too, didn't you? Well ... many people will pass through here who still do not know Jesus Christ. Here ... this is the task of the Pastorella Sister and of the entire Pauline Family united".*

*Six days after his death, I had a dream in conversation with him about the life and mission of the Pauline Family. He said: "The whole work of the Pauline Family must have this end: 'Bring God to people and people to God' and get to the point of saying like St. Paul, 'I fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith '". In the dream, after walking a little, he showed me a large building and told me: "Do you see this building? Here is the united work of the Pauline Family". In front of the building t was a very large Jesus with open arms and an inscription with bright letters: "Come to me all of you". Alberione told me again: "Let's see inside: let's start from the ground floor to the twelfth floor". In all the floors there was the Pauline Family and persons who worked with great joy and peace. The refectory was common for the persons. The Church was large and beautiful; the Blessed Sacrament was exposed in the center. The whole Pauline Family and the people prayed together, exulting in the presence of God. "I want you to understand the desire of Christ and mine. The Pauline Family united with Christ and his people. The opposite is useless, if it is not for the actualization of the good". And again he took me to those persons who were working together and told me: "This is how the Pauline Family has to live". Then I had the courage and told him: "Don Alberione, if this is God's desire and yours, you should show it to the great members of the Congregation and not to me, who am very small and useless before all that you showed me and told me". He replied: "So God wants and so do I want also ". I told him I would need to go to Italy, to talk to the Mother General, but I didn't know how. He replied: "Come to Italy" and again "Go with faith, Jesus Good Shepherd and Mary bless you. And he made a long genuflection before the Blessed Sacrament, after which he disappeared and I woke up. In conclusion: I understood that Fr. Alberione was a prophet and a person of God.*

We thank the sisters who in the time of Sr. Martha's illness, looked after her with so much love and dedication and in particular for having allowed this sister to live her Marian devotion intensely, favoring the prayer of the rosary daily and as a community.

As we hand over our sister Martha to the mercy of the Father, let us entrust to her intercession the journey of the Congregation and of the Pauline Family, so that they may be paths of communion, to live and give Jesus Christ Way to Truth and Life to the world.

*Sr. Aminta Sarmiento Puentes*  
Superior general

Ragusa, 16 September 2019  
Memorial, St. Robert Bellarmine