

## ST. PAULA FRASSINETTI

1809-1882

JUNE 12<sup>TH</sup>

“A time to be born, and a time to die”

St. Paula Frassinetti was born on March 3, 1809 in Genoa, Italy. She died on June 11<sup>th</sup>, 1882 in Rome, Italy. Paula grew up in a loving home with her parents and two older brothers. Two younger brothers joined the family later on. Her mother, Angela, helped her develop great faith. Paula was full of grace even as a young girl. She learned to read, write and about theology especially from her older brothers and father.

Tragedy struck with Paula was 9 years old when her mother died. Paula quickly took on the role of homemaker and mother to her 2 younger brothers. She worked very hard without complaining.

At an early age Paula felt called to a religious vocation but her duties at home often made this faithful Saint believe it could not happen. When she was 19 her health had deteriorated mostly due to all the responsibilities she had carried on for so many years caring for her family. She was both physically and emotionally exhausted.

Her elder brother, Giuseppe, was a Priest in the seaside town of Quinto, Italy. It was here that Paula was able to rest and heal from long, hard years of work. It was also here that she heard God calling her to be an educator and to religious life. She also discovered the needs of the poor and destitute for education and housing. It became her goal to educate poor children who would otherwise not be able to obtain an education.

It did not take long for Paula to find other likeminded young women to join her. In 1835 a priest from Bergamo - Father Luca Passi, a friend of her brother, Father Giuseppe, asked Paula to assume the, “Pious Work of Saint Dorothy”. Father Passi had begun this work to reach the poorest of all children. Knowing Paula’s work and dedication for the poor he knew she was the perfect person to take over this work. She did not hesitate to assume her new responsibilities. From this day forward her order of Sisters were called, “The Sisters of St. Dorothy” This first group of consecrated young women took on the theme, “To be fully available in the hands of God to evangelize through education.”

Through many hardships and sufferings St. Paula and her sisters opened many schools, bordering schools, and orphanages. They were located in many cities in Italy, including Rome and around the world including Brazil, Portugal, Switzerland and eventually in the US. Today there are still many schools worldwide.

St. Paula was a woman of prayer. She especially loved praying at night in the silence and peace. Throughout all the sufferings and challenges she encountered in her life she knew her trust was in God. Often people sought her out for Spiritual direction. One question she encountered frequently was from people who wanted to die young as to be rid of the difficulties of the world. St. Paula’s advice was simple and true even today. “God did not ask us when we wished to be born, so He also does not need our suggestions about when we should die. We should trust in His ways when the time is right”.

### **Here are some of St. Paula’s favorite quotes:**

- “Work in full simplicity”
- “We're in God's hands, and we are so very well”
- “Our mission is to educate thru heart and love”

St. Paula died on June 11, 1882 (some places celebrate her feast day as June 12<sup>th</sup>). She was declared a Saint in 1984 by Pope John Paul II. Her body lies incorrupt in Italy.

### **Practical Insight:**

1. "Work in full simplicity" I love this quote that St. Paula put into action in her own life and those who served with her. How can we learn to work in full simplicity and without complaining?
2. "We're in God's hands, and we are so very well". So many times we can get bogged down by the craziness of our earthly world that we forget that our lives are really VERY WELL!!! During the next month take a few minutes each day to put yourself in our Lord's hands and feel His goodness and absord how very well our lives really are.
3. St. Paula loved to pray and she loved the poor. Take time this month to find the unique part of the day that is especially good for you to pray to Jesus. It might be in the early morning hours before life gets busy or it may be like St. Paula in the quiet hours of the night OR somewhere in between. Whatever the time of day, make it a special time between you and Jesus. A time for you to talk but even more to listen. Take time also to pray for the poorest among us and ask how we might be able to teach and help with our hearts and love.

### **Prayer:**

Dear Jesus,

Like St. Paula we too have challenges and suffering in our lives. Help us to always remember that you are with us. That we are in Your hands. Help us to remember that there is a time to be born and a time to die and that decision is in Your hands alone. Help us to work in simplicity with our hearts and love to make our world a better place for the poor in spirit and the poor in material things. And help us Jesus to make a special sacred time in our lives to speak to you and to listen to you that we might pour ourselves on you and You upon us.

Amen