



*“Faith in the resurrection
opens up fraternal communion
beyond the threshold of death ...”.*
(RoL 24)



Today, 23 February at 06.00am (local time)
at Pompéia Hospital, Caxias do Sul/RS (Brazil), our sister

IRACY MARIA, Sr ASSUNTA FESTA

returned to the Father’s House.

She was 86 years old and 62 years of Religious Life.

In the words of the prophet Isaiah from today’s liturgy, *so the word that goes from my mouth does not return to me empty, without carrying out my will and succeeding in what it was sent to do*, we can think of our sister Assunta. United with Jesus Good Shepherd, living Word, she returned to the Father's House, having at heart what He wanted and fulfilling various ministries as a Pastorella with generosity and dedication.

Our Iracy Maria was born in Aguas de Rondonia / RS on 02 September 1934, the fourth of six children, into a family of Italian descendants. She was baptized in the Parish of “Nossa Senhora do Rosário” in Rondonia on 07 October 1934.

She entered the Congregation on March 23, 1955 in Caxias do Sul-3ª Legua and in 1956 after receiving the religious habit, she was assigned to the community of Fagundes Varela and, subsequently, in 1957 to Bento Gonçalves. She entered the novitiate on 01 February in Caxias do Sul - Av. San Leopoldo, where she made her first profession on 02 February 1959, taking the name of Sister Assunta. On 02 February 1964, she made her perpetual profession.

Sr Assunta is described as follows: *A sister with a great religious spirit, sociable and welcoming, simple and tender, delicate and capable of sacrifice. She had a practical intelligence, constantly dedicated to learning and giving herself with great generosity in the apostolate. She was happy to spent time in the chapel praying many rosaries according to the intentions of the Congregation, of the Province and for all people in need. She was not self-centered but was always concerned for others and for everyone she met or was in need. She worked hard to provide for what was needed, especially at the beginning of the foundation in Brazil.*

In her many years of pastoral ministry, she was active in the following parish communities: Pirataba Torres (1959); from 1960 in Caxias do Sul-Av. San Leopoldo; from 1963 in San Paolo - Jabaquara "Divina Pastora Institute"; from 1967 in Barreto Niteroi; from 1971 in San Paolo - Jardim. In 1973, she was sent to Santana do Araguaia/PA as coordinator of the health sector at the local level, a place that had no doctor and with limited resources. Here, with nursing competence, she managed people’s dressings and assisted pregnant women. The sisters testify that Sr Assunta several times, went by bicycle at night to homes to assist women at childbirth.

In 1974, she joined the community of Fagundes Varela, to continue to exercise her service as a nurse. From 1976, she was in Bento Gonçalves; from 1980 at Murialdo-Porto Alegre; Porto Alegre- "Alberione" (1983); from 1984, she returned to Caxias do Sul-Av. San Leopoldo; from 1987, she was in Caxias do Sul in the novitiate community and from 1990, she was still in Caxias do Sul-3ª Legua. From 1994, she was in Caxias do Sul-Bairro Cinquentenario. From 2001, she was a member of the community of Caxias do Sul-3ª Legua engaged in the pastoral care of families and some community services. In 2008, lived in Cascavel / PR, dedicated to visiting the sick.

The sisters testify that in her pastoral care *she always distinguished herself for her attitudes of gentleness and attentiveness both in serving and in relationships*. These were attitudes that she practiced in everything she accomplished, from cooking to nursing. She loved nature, especially flowers.

In 2009, due to poor health, she was transferred to Caxias do Sul - "Betania" Community, where the sisters and the health personnel once again testify to *her delicacy in dealing with others and her ability to be thankful for every kind gesture she received*. *Sr Assunta spent the last days of her life suffering, not being able to help in the various activities. However, she accepted her suffering without complaining and entrusting herself to the Lord.*

Our thanks to the sisters who have assisted Sr Assunta with love and dedication, especially in her last days of trial. With much patience and maternal love, they have sought in every way to alleviate her physical suffering. Our gratitude also to the health workers.

We entrust Sr Assunta to the Father's mercy. We thank him for the gift of our sister who for many long years bore witness to the love and tenderness of the Good Shepherd for his people. And to you, Sr Assunta, who prayed so much to the Mother of the Good Shepherd through the holy Rosary interceding, particularly, for the most vulnerable, we entrust to you all who are sick and especially those affected by Covid-19 and suffering humanity.

Sr Aminta Sarmiento Puentes
Superior General

Rome, 23 February 2021
St Polycarp, bishop and martyr