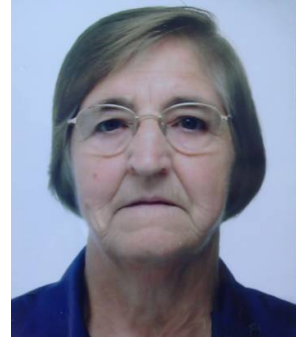




*Faith in the resurrection
opens us to fraternal communion,
beyond the threshold of death”
(RdV 24)*



Today, 8 December 2019 at 12.40 am (local time)
In Caxias do Sul (Brazil), our sister

MARIA, Sr JACINTA BOFF BORGES

returned to the Father’s House.

She was 85 years old and 58 years of Religious Life

On the solemnity of the Immaculate Conception, while at the heart of the Church echoed the Virgin Mary’s response to the Angel, *Behold the servant of the Lord, let it be done to me according to your Word*, our sister Jacinta, who lived in obedience to the Word and dedication to the people of God, surrendered herself in the arms of the Mother of God and of Jesus the Good Shepherd who she always loved in the poorest brothers and sisters.

Maria, the daughter of Braz Antonio, father, and Robelia, mother, of Italian-German background, was born in the city of Torres/RS on 7 June 1934 and baptized in her native city on 15 July 1934. Maria came from a large family, third of twelve children: five brothers and seven sisters.

She joined the Congregation on 21 February 1958 in Piratuba/RS and began her novitiate on 1 February 1960 in Caxias do Sul. She made her first religious profession on 2 February 1961 in Caxias do Sul and in the same city, her perpetual profession on 2 September 1966.

She carried out the pastoral ministry in various cities of Brazil: Cazuza Ferreira/RS (1970-1976), particularly engaged in human promotion activities; Caxias do Sul (1976-1978), where she was involved in the liturgy and family ministry; Murialdo-Porto Alegre/RS (1979); Getúlio Vargas/RS (1980-1983), in the animation of the pastoral care of families. Morro da Cruz-Porto Alegre/RS (1984-1989), in the pastoral care of children. In 1990, she spent a sabbatical year in Terceira Léguas/RS. In 1991, in Cazuza Ferreira/RS, she lived in rural communities and engaged in the visit to the sick. In Bodoquena/MS (from 1992-2001), as animator of the communities and responsible for small projects in favour of mothers groups and health care. In 2002, she was in Terceira Léguas/RS for a time of rest; Campo Grande/MS (from 2003-2006), looking after the formation of family groups and groups of the third age; 2007 Cascavel/PR; Figueirópolis/TO (2008-2019), doing family accompaniment. She was superior of the community at Cazuza Ferreira in 1971, Getúlio Vargas in 1983 and Porto Alegre-Morro da Cruz in 1987.

This is how the sister have described her. *“Our dearest Sr Jacinta has always distinguished herself for virtues that were much acclaimed by our Founder: joy, simplicity and industriousness; always silent in the total giving of herself. She lived a style of total poverty, having nothing superfluous. She was a very welcoming person and therefore much loved by the people of God she worked with, especially the little ones and the poor. In recent years, in the community of Figueirópolis/TO, she was involved in various pastoral activities, especially prompting families and health. Despite her advanced age, she accompanied Bible groups that gathered in zones and families. A commitment that flowed from profound life of prayer, cultivating a simple and cordial relationship with the Lord. She never neglected to care for her spiritual life and daily personal prayer. In the silence of the night, though tired, her last moments were for prayer before the Good Shepherd. She also distinguished herself for her concern for the poor as her favourite children; she never let them go empty-handed, without giving them something.”*

Sr Jacinta was attentive to the “study wheel” through various renewals to serve better the people of God. She engaged in courses on the psychology of relationships, social welfare, religious psychopedagogy, leader of social works, pastoral care of children, theological-pastoral formation, , *Revitalização sjbp* and others that qualified her being a mother and sister in the pastoral ministry.

Just recently, after leaving Figueirópolis/TO, Sr Jacinta prepared some health remedies that could be useful in her next placement. Lately, Sr Jacinta and her sisters had lived some intense days due to the closure of the Figueirópolis community. Days of thanksgiving and farewell that proved physically tiring for Sr Jacinta causing some health issues related to blood pressure and hence the need for medical attention. After the warm and grateful farewell from the parish community, Sr Jacinta had gone to the Provincial House in Caxias do Sul on 3 December but on the following morning, she suffered a stroke. Brought to hospital, she had three days of intensive therapy, receiving both medical treatment and the affection of family and sisters from the Congregation.

Sr Jacinta returned to the Father’s House with the serenity of a life fully given to the Good Shepherd and to his people. We thank the sister who in these days of trial offered Sr Jacinta the treatment and the affection she need. We bless the Lord for the gift of the life and the vocation of Sr Jacinta and entrust her to the Father’s mercy. Let us her intercession for the Assemblies of the two Provinces of Brazil, so that they may be places of intense communion to “dream the future” of our pastoral mission as prophecy of pastoral motherhood in the Church.

Sr Aminta Sarmiento Puentes
Superior General

Rome, 8 December 2019

Solemnity of the Immaculate Conception of the Blessed Virgin Mary