



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



Today, 16 May 2015, at 0.30 (Brazilian time)

In the Pompéia Hospital of Caxias do Sul

SR CELESTE MERCEDES CEARON

returned to the Father's house.

She was 83 old and 57 years of religious life.

In a distance of few hours, on the Eve of the Ascension, the Good Shepherd visited our Congregation again, bringing with him to the Father our sister Celeste, so that she may be embraced in his mercy.

Mercedes was born on 2 October 1931, under the protection of the Guardian Angels, in Vila Ipê - Vacaria RS in Brazil. She was baptized on 26 November in the Parish of the Sacred Heart - Antonio Prado RS. Belonging to a large Christian family, she is the fifth of 13 children, seven brothers and five sisters.

At twenty years old, she already matured a religious vocation and entered the Congregation on 6 April 1954 in Terceira Légua, where she began her formation process. On 1 February 1957 she entered the Novitiate in Caxias do Sul - S. Leopoldo and emitted the First Profession on 2 February 1958, taking the name Sr. Celeste. In the evaluation for admission to First profession, this was said of her: *"The religious spirit is very good; she is joyful, of stable character, is always generous and always willing to do anything."*

After Profession, from 1958 to 1963, Sr. Celeste dedicated herself with much love in the education apostolate in the kindergarten in Centenário do Sul (1958-1959) and Fagundes Varela (1959-1961, 1962-1967, 1969-1975). Meanwhile, she prepared for Perpetual profession done on 2 February 1963 in Caxias do Sul, S. Leopoldo.

In admitting her to Perpetual profession, it was stressed that: *"She is shy, but possesses good qualities for the apostolate, she loves it and it was excellently proven even in directing a parish school. She loves the apostolate and carries it out with responsibility. She acknowledges having impulsive moments, but her progress to dominate them is clearly seen."*

She went back to the community of Caxias do Sul, S. Leopoldo, on several other occasions (1961-1962, 1984, 1981, 1998-2000; 2001-2004), devoting herself to the ministry of pastoral care, in teaching in the school and in the coordination of various educational activities. At the same time, she made herself available for the various needs of the Province, always with

great availability and generosity. From 1967 to 1968, her availability was also sought as assistant of young people in formation in the community of Terceira Légua.

She participated in various up-dating, training courses for teaching in the kindergarten and in particular she was passionate for the Bible courses, those of theological - pastoral type in order to accomplish well her ministry in parishes. She also participated in the course of pastoral charism promoted within the Province .

She carried out the ministry of pastoral care especially in the South and Southeast Regions: in the communities of Cazuza Ferreira, Regente Feijo, Medianeira, Porto Alegre, Canela and Caxias do Sul. For many years, from 1968 to 2005, she devoted herself to the care of children in the nursery school, a service that was hand in hand with some pastoral activities in the parishes. In 2005, she carried out some internal services in the community of Terceira Légua.

In late May 2006, Sr. Celeste was transferred to the Community of Caxias - Betânia, devoting herself to general services and also to have an easier access to medical care. In particular, she needed a special care for the heart, for cardiac arrhythmia and other health problems due to age. From 2010, her memory diminished progressively, and over the four years she was diagnosed with Alzheimer's disease.

During the time she was in Betânia community, Sr. Celeste has truly done a good journey of inner peace and acceptance of the sisters and also regarding her health condition. When sisters visit the community, the first word she would say was to ask if they were well, if they have eaten and if they have a place to rest. The sisters observed that she returned simple and transparent as a child.

On occasion of meetings and group work, she was very happy and ask when to prepare lunch with "*agnolini*", that is, the tortellini of Italian memory. But before anything else, she spent long time in the chapel in silent prayer, in dialogue with the Shepherd Jesus, asking help from the sisters in praying the Liturgy of the Hours. The prayer of the Rosary, in conversation with the Virgin Mary, made her very joyful .

Meanwhile, her health gradually declined and ever more losing contact with reality. On 30 April, she was admitted at the Pompéia Hospital in Caxias do Sul, living her preparation to meet the Lord in the mysterious silence of the mind, but certainly in the availability of the heart so as to be faithful until the end .

Thank you, Sr. Celeste, for the gift of your life to Jesus the Good Shepherd, for the love to the little ones and their families, for your prayer. We are certain that you will continue to turn to the Father for all of us and for the whole Church. Enjoy now the joy of Mary, the Virgin Mother, along with all the Pastorelle of Heaven .

Sr Marta Finotelli
Superior general

Verona, 16 May 2015
Eve of the Solemnity of the Ascension of the Lord