



*"Faith in the resurrection
opens us to fraternal communion
beyond the threshold of death..."*

(RoL 24)



Today, 28th August 2013, at 1.30a.m. (Brazilian time)
at the Hospital Vila Lobos- Mooca- São Paulo
Jesus Good Shepherd presented to the Father our Sister

MARIA LUSIMAR DA PENHA

She was 59 years old of which 29 years were in religious life.

"Lord you scrutinise me and you know me!" (Psalm 139: 1). The Psalm of today's Eucharistic celebration expresses well the interior dimension of this our Sister, who was called to Eternal Life on the day when the Liturgy commemorates a great doctor and pastor of the Church, Saint Augustine and on the fourth day of the Novena to Mary Mother of the Good Shepherd.

Maria Lusimar was born on 8 May in 1954 at Princesa, in the State of Paraíba. She was the fourth of eight children and was baptised on 8 June 1955. She entered the Congregation in the community of Brasília/DF on 28 January 1977 and after the stage of the initial formation, she entered the Novitiate in the community of São Paulo on 9 February 1982. On 28 January 1984 at Jardim São Paulo, she made her first profession and on the 22 January 1989, the perpetual profession.

In her request to be admitted to the perpetual profession in 1988, she wrote: *"The experience of God and the certainty of Him being in my life gives me peace to ask this, I feel serene in making a definitive consecration. God is working in my life"*. A certainty of God's presence has always being the characteristic stance of Sr Lusimar's religious and apostolic life.

During the formation years and then in the subsequent years, she gained much from the study of Philosophy and Theology, even specialising in Liturgy; Sr Lusimar valued study and with responsibility placed it at the service of pastoral ministry.

Sr Lusimar was a joyful and creative person, who related with much frankness with the sisters and in the apostolate. She lived her pastoral commitment with much dedication in the different parish communities where she was sent: Iepê/SP 1984-1986; Piracicaba/SP 1986-1988; at Jardim, São Paulo 1988-1994 e 2000-2005; at Parque Independência, SP 1995-1996; at Brasília/DF 1996-1997; Assis 1998-1999 and 2006-2008 and São José, Jardim from 2011. She applies herself with enthusiasm in Youth Ministry, in the coordination of the Parish Catechesis, in the Formation of the animators of Basic Christian Communities, in Liturgical animation and even in the social ministry, especially in the area of human promotion. She placed particular attention towards the poor, for whom she would be ready to fight for them. *Pone un'attenzione particolare verso i poveri, per i quali è disposta a lottare.* She greatly

enjoys the liturgy and offered her talents in the animation of liturgical celebrations, accompanying the songs with the guitar, both during the liturgy and in the Christian community's feast events.

In August of 2010, while she is in the community of São José, Jardim, she was diagnosed with ovarian cancer and with a lot of determination and hope underwent various surgeries and therapies, her love of life gave her a strong will to fight against the illness. The disease did not stop her from being active and to continue making her contribution to the pastoral mission and in the fraternal life. She is aware of the seriousness of her illness, but accepts this particular visit of the Lord in serenity and trust.

Serenity in receiving and living her precarious health, accompanies sr Lusimar in recent years. In a written testimony in the Newsletter of the Province, "*Living and Announcing*" of 2012, while speaking of her illness, sr Lusimar puts it this way: "*I accepted with trust and much serenity the news of the disease. I am grateful for the hope, faith and trust in God the Father who created me healthy and gives me the courage to fight for life. I am grateful for my religious family - the Pastorelle Sisters - for their intensive care and prayers. I thank my family, my friends and the people who serve in mission through their prayer, support and dedication.*"

In fact, this entrustment full of gratitude that characterizes the more recent times of the earthly life of Sr. Lusimar, was already pointed out by her in 2009, during the canonical visit she shared how the life-giving encounter with Jesus was renewing her in pastoral care, and wrote: "*Jesus cares for me, he inspires me and leads me and I feel serene, calm and strengthened*".

Over the past two months, the cancer spread all over her body, so it became necessary for Sr. Lusimar to be hospitalized and have intensive care. With clarity and openness of heart she continued to thank the Sisters and the hospital staff that assist and accompany her with great care and loving dedication.

We trust that Sr. Maria Lusimar, already sees the beautiful luminous face of Jesus Good Shepherd, and with her guitar she continues playing and singing His glory, along with all the Pastorelle of heaven. As we prepare to celebrate the 75th anniversary of the founding of our congregation, we ask Mary, Mother of the Good Shepherd, to welcome her in the endless joy, and "join her with the sheep who have been docile and faithful".

Sr Marta Finotelli
Superior General

Cantel – Cuba, 28 August 2013
S. Augustine, Bishop and Doctor of the Church