

Death Notice

SISTER MARIA FRANCESCA ND 4899

Berta Elisabetta SCHWIENBACHER

Sacred Heart Delegation, Rome



Date and Place of Birth	March 19, 1932	St. Nikolaus, Val d'Ultimo, BZ, Italia
Date and Place of Profession	September 08, 1958	Rome, Italy
Date and Place of Death	August 18, 2014	Rome, Delegation Center
Date and Place of Burial	August 20, 2014	Rome, Camposanto Verano

Berta was the youngest of the seven children of Franz Schwiembacher and Veronika Zöschg. Two sisters to whom Sister Maria Francesca always remained very closely united joined a Franciscan community. As an apprentice in Turin, Berta came to know the Sisters of Notre Dame, was fascinated with their charism and decided to join them on their journey.

As a daughter of the mountains, and even more so from the Val d'Ultimo, one of the most beautiful valleys in the Alto Adige region, she faithfully and zealously guarded the quiet privacy and the delicacy which distinguishes the beauty of its mountains. All her life long she kept and cultivated a sense of beauty and harmony. As a sacristan she knew to decorate our chapels with fine taste, revealing a hidden artistic talent.

Throughout her quiet journey she offered precious services to almost all the houses of the province / delegation: Rome, Carpinone, Bolzano, Milano, Cadibona, and Turin.

In Turin, where she ministered for 38 years, she became somewhat of "an institution". She knew everything and everyone, and all knew to whom to go when they needed something. The children in the school were happy when some task took them to the reception desk. Sister Maria Francesca knew to listen to them with love and to console them. Teachers, employees, parents and former students looked to her with great esteem and came to her for advice and when they needed a person they could trust.

In her work she was very diligent. This was expressed in her daily updated agenda, so that nothing would be forgotten and she would not cause anyone any trouble. She treated the house as hers, taking care of it with all her heart and all her energy.

In the past years her work became more and more tiring for her, even though she sought to hide her pain as to not be a burden for her local community and the school. The news of the closing of the school and the sale of the house left a deep mark on her heart. She did not make it all the way to the end. One day as she was at the reception desk to open the door for the children she suffered a stroke and had to spend several weeks in the hospital, after which it was necessary to take her to Rome. Her illness and the departure from Turin without being able to return to her beloved house left a great void.

During the last 15 months of her illness in Rome she was a shining example of patience, gratitude and complete adherence to the will of God. Her peaceful smile attracted and edified her co-sisters and all those who came into contact with her, offering a glimpse of her inner greatness and her joyful simplicity.

We thank the Lord for the great gift Sister Maria Francesca has been for our Congregation by her quiet witness.

Now that she is living in the Father's house and knows what we need, we ask her to intercede for us, so that we can complete the work that has been entrusted to us by our good God.

R.I.P.