

## Our Lady Aparecida Province Opens a New School, Canoas, Brazil



February 11, 2022 was a special date in the history of Our Lady Aparecida Province. It was the day on which we opened the Notre Dame Early Childhood Education School in Nova Santa Rita, RS, which offers Early Childhood Education for two to five-year-old children.

The new school is located in the former site of the SNDs national novitiate. Because the building had been unoccupied for years, the new school demanded a significant amount of investment in renovating the physical and pedagogical structures as well as in the hiring of teachers and staff. Sister Marta Lopes Fonseca, principal of the Notre Dame School, described the preparations for the arrival of the students: “With great commitment and, above all, involved in a sentiment of love, we dedicated ourselves to prepare the venue that will be part of the children's daily lives.”

The inauguration of the school itself was set for February 11<sup>th</sup>. Besides, the mayor of the city, Mr. Rodrigo Batistella, a former student of Colégio Maria Auxiliadora, and the staff of Nova Santa Rita’s Department of Education, a significant group of Sisters, the principal and employees of Colégio Maria Auxiliadora and administrators of the Notre Dame Education Network also attended. After the ceremony, our guests enjoyed an opportunity to socialize and visit the facilities of the new school.

Sister Vania Maria Dalla Vecchia, president of the Notre Dame Association who also attended the gathering commented: “The Notre Dame Education Network has the mission to offer a solid education with Christian values and the vision of forming leaders to transform our society.”

On February 18, the school welcomed the first students. Since then, it has offered “excellent teaching, with human and integral education that translates into the development of competences, abilities, attitudes, and values,” as highlighted by Sister Renete Maria Cocco, Director of Education for the ND Schools.