

Death Notice

SISTER MARIA GENTIL MAGAGNIN ND 4847

Maria Gentil MAGAGNIN



Holy Cross Province, Passo Fundo, RS, Brazil

Date and Place of Birth: May 7, 1934, Tapejara, RS
Date and Place of Profession: February 18, 1954, Passo Fundo, RS
Date and place of Death: June 8, 2020, Casa Betânia, Não Me Toque, RS
Date and Place of Burial: June 9, 2020, Casa Santa Cruz, Passo Fundo, RS

Sister Maria Gentil's parents were farmers and, as the firstborn among three siblings, she got used to being responsible from an early age on. It was her father's habit to read the Sacred History to his children, a practice that became part of the family culture.

As a child, she attended a one-room schoolhouse. Even though she felt called to religious life, permission to enter a congregation was given by her father only after her sister Teosene, was born. Then she was able to go to Colégio Medianeira in Tapejara, from where she went to Passo Fundo, entering the SND novitiate in 1952 and making perpetual vows in 1959.

Although she did not have the necessary formal teacher training, Sister already taught classes, depending on the support and advice of sisters who were trained teachers. She served as a literacy teacher in several Notre Dame schools and assisted in the care for the boarding students.

Later, she graduated from teacher training in Passo Fundo, RS; from Natural Sciences at the Federal College in Rio Branco, Acre; and from Theology at the Santa Ursula University in Rio de Janeiro. Having completed teacher training, she ministered as elementary and high school mathematics teacher in several Notre Dame schools, as well as in public schools.

In 1971, the Holy Cross Province opened a mission in the State of Acre. Among the pioneers was Sister Maria Gentil, who generously volunteered to be a missionary in the northern region of Brazil. There she served as the local superior, principal, curriculum coordinator, as well as the math and chemistry teacher in the schools in Tarauacá and Feijó.

Sister Maria Gentil dedicated herself entirely to the people of these places, who were thirsting for culture and evangelization. Sister assisted in setting up schools, training teachers, and organizing content that would improve the quality of life of the people in general. On Sundays, she guided groups in the art of cooking, embroidering, painting on fabric, etc. She had a special zeal for the Eucharistic Crusade, and taught many children to love and revere Jesus in the Eucharist.

Those who had the privilege of enjoying Sister Maria Gentil's presence and were able to see the fruits of the seeds sown by her, testify to her tireless service and to the great cultural and religious assets established by Sister and the other missionaries in that part of Brazil. It was in this context that Sister M. Nonata Bezerra and other young women, who currently are Sisters of Notre Dame, met Sr. Maria Gentil, were touched by her witness as consecrated religious and by the way she carried out ministry.

From 2003 to 2005, Sister Maria Gentil was an adoration sister at Casa Madre in Rome. She was very devoted to Mary and to the Eucharist. Back in Brazil, she treasured the memories from her experience at Casa Madre and loved talking about that period.

In 2016, when her strength started to decline gradually, Sister was transferred to Casa Betânia community, where she died on June 8. May the Lord welcome her in His glory with Mary, whom she loved dearly.