

Death Notice

SISTER HEDI MARIA

ND 5203

formerly Sister Maria Estefânia

Hedi Maria KUNKEL



Holy Cross Province, Passo Fundo, RS, Brazil

Date and Place of Birth: November 12, 1936 Cerro Azul, RS
Date and Place of Profession: February 12, 1959 Passo Fundo, RS
Date and Place of Death: May 04, 2021 ND São Sebastião Hospital, Espumoso, RS
Date and Place of Burial: May 04, 2021 Sta Cruz Cemetery, Passo Fundo, RS

“Evangelizers are like angels, like guardian angels, messengers of good’, who call us by name and announce the joy and life of Jesus. Those who evangelize are always on the road, searching together with others. Whoever announces, fulfills the desire of God, is always in search of God and transmits it to others.” (Address of His Holiness Pope Francis to participants at the international meeting the “Church Which Goes Forth”. *Evangelii Gaudium: Reception and Perspectives*)

Hedi Maria Kunkel was the daughter of João Arthur and Luiza Köhler Kunkel, both farmers. She was the sixth among 16 siblings. Hedi became a postulant in 1956 and, at her investment, received the name Sister Maria Estefânia which was later changed to her original name Hedi Maria. She completed the teaching training program at João Batista Rotta School, in Espumoso, and was qualified to teach the 1st to 4th grades.

Sister Hedi Maria met Jesus in her diverse ministries and activities: growing vegetables and flowers, preparing meals, caring for the elderly, teaching catechesis to children, praying the rosary and taking the Eucharist to the elderly and the sick. It was her special gift to spend time talking with people, praying with them, enjoying a joke or a good laugh, and even solving a problem.

For many years, Sister coordinated the culinary services in our ND schools, hospitals, nursing homes and religious communities. At the same time as she prepared substantial and healthy meals for all age groups, she conveyed her own joy of living and the pleasure of evangelizing and serving the Lord. Her carefully arranged flowers and plants lightened the atmosphere and provided a sense of well-being. When she ministered in seminaries, the candidates for the priesthood and religious life could count on Sister’s motherly care, prayers, and advice. She was a good listener and knew how to help the students to deal with their homesickness.

From 1992 to 1994, Sister Hedi Maria was a cook at the Motherhouse, Rome. After she returned to Brazil, she often shared stories about the wonderful experiences of living in an international community and the celebrations in Saint Peter’s Basilica as well as her visits to historical and tourist sites in the Italian capital.

For 40 years Sister also served as local superior in various communities. Her zeal and love for Religious Life and for the Kingdom of God were evident in her daily prayer life, as well as her commitment to her various ministries and to a life of joyful simplicity. In 2021, Sister was a member of the community in Selbach. In early April, she was diagnosed with a serious lung problem as a result of Covid-19. After a long hospitalization, on May 4th, Sister peacefully left for eternity. May Sister Hedi Maria now live in the everlasting joy with the good God.