

Death Notice

SISTER MARIA ZELINDA
(formerly, Sister Maria Elenara)

ND 5826



Zelinda GIRELLI

Holy Cross Province, Passo Fundo, RS, Brazil

Date and Place of Birth:	May 29, 1942	Ilópolis, Municipality of Encantado, RS
Date and Place of Profession:	February 11, 1966	Passo Fundo, RS
Date and Place of Death:	March 11, 2024	Casa Betânia, Não Me Toque, RS
Date and Place of Burial:	March 12, 2024	Sta. Cruz Cemetery Passo Fundo, RS

The Gospel for March 11th echoed a royal official's request to Jesus on behalf of his sick son. The official believed Jesus's words "Go, your son will live." Sister Maria Zelinda also believed in Jesus's words "Come and follow me" and dedicated her life to spreading the Kingdom of God.

Zelinda was the fourth child of nine, born to Achilles Girelli and Maria Riboldi, both of whom were farmers. She began her Postulancy with the Sisters of Notre Dame in Passo Fundo on February 21, 1963, and entered the Novitiate on February 11, 1964, receiving the religious name Sister Maria Elenara. She later returned to her baptismal name, Zelinda.

After receiving a degree in pedagogy with a specialization in school supervision, Sister ministered in the field of education. She cared particularly about students facing significant learning challenges while serving as a teacher, principal, vice-principal, program coordinator, and school supervisor in our Notre Dame Schools and public schools in various locations.

Upon retiring from formal education, Sister Maria Zelinda intensified her commitment to catechesis and parish ministry, which she cherished and devoted herself as long as her health permitted. Sister was also active in youth gatherings and, as a vocation animator, accompanied candidates for religious life to vocational programs.

Sister Maria Zelinda was always aware of global and Congregational realities. She eagerly shared her opinions and took part in an assortment of programs. Sister nurtured her spiritual life through personal and communal prayer and enthusiastically joined in community life.

In 2022, Sister suffered a brain aneurysm, which required specialized care. She joined the community of Casa Betânia in Não Me Toque, where she busied herself with a series of occupational activities. In December 2023, Sister suffered an ischemic stroke, which confined her to bed and made communication a challenge. However, when a sister prayed with her, she showed signs of understanding and mouthed the prayers.

On March 11th, Sister received the Anointing of the Sick and peacefully journeyed to the Father's House, where pain and tears were replaced by eternal joy. May Sister Maria Zelinda, now in God's embrace, intercede for abundant vocations to further the Kingdom of God.