

Death Notice

SISTER MARIA SIBILLA

ND 4174

Maria Sibilla PRIETSCH



Our Lady of Aparecida Province, Canoas, RS – Brazil

Date and Place of Birth:	March 22, 1926	Boqueirão, County of São Lourenço do Sul
Date and Place of Profession:	February 12, 1947	Passo Fundo, RS
Date and Place of Death:	December 26, 2014	Recanto Aparecida, Canoas, RS
Date and Place of Burial:	December 27, 2014	Convent Cemetery, Canoas, RS

“Think of the flowers growing in the fields.” Matt. 6: 28-29

This verse of the Gospel of Matthew can be applied to the life of Sister Maria Sibilla. Her love for nature, her contemplative gaze and her care for creation became an integral part of her life of praise and a spiritual offering.

The couple, Adolfo Prietsch and Maria Antonia Halfen Prietsch, members of a German family residing in the countryside of the county of São Lourenço do Sul, had the joy of welcoming a girl with beautiful blue eyes on March 22, 1926: Maria Sibilla Prietsch.

The mother, with three little children, had been widowed and, after some years, she married her brother-in-law. In the second marriage, she had 10 more children of whom Maria Sibilla was the 8th daughter.

When only a month old, her parents took her to be baptized. Together with her parents and siblings, Maria Sibilla was educated in the faith. She received the sacraments of Christian Initiation and kept her heart open to the call of God in her life. While still young, she welcomed the call of the Lord to consecrated religious life. In 1944, she left her parents' home to enter the Formation House of the Sisters of Notre Dame in Passo Fundo. On February 12, 1947, she was consecrated through religious profession.

Maria Sibilla was the daughter of farmers. Through her contact with nature, she kept her interest in a special way in cultivating fruit gardens and plants. She was delighted with fertility and the developments of nature and she perceived in everything a sign of God's goodness.

Sister Maria Sibilla's life can be characterized by the thought of Pope Francis when he addressed religious: “The joy of the Gospel fills the heart and the whole life of those who meet Jesus.” Goodness and joy marked her personality, making of her a caring woman, always directed towards others, welcoming, and a lover of the good God. At community feasts, she contributed her joy and her “mouth organ”, an instrument which she liked to play. Gratitude flowed naturally in her kind heart. She liked to write. She took every opportunity to write a short letter to thank for every attention that was given to her community or to herself personally.

From a young age, she devoted herself to teaching. As a religious, she exercised the role of local superior and provincial assistant. In the living of her mission, even in the most difficult moments, she carried the cross of human limitations, leaving one hand free to pick flowers on the way.

Sister Maria Sibilla maintained deep relationships with her relatives and appreciated their visits. In the places where she worked, she left marks that time will not erase.

In her advanced age, she used her time wisely. She lived joyfully in the midst of the little things of daily life and expressed her joy through music, song, handicrafts, and care of flowers and plants. She accompanied every fruit tree from its flowering until the fruits were ripe. She expressed great joy in offering the harvested fruits to her community and surrounding communities.

On the morning of December 26, at 8 am, Sister Maria Sibilla completed her journey in this world and was welcomed into the embrace of the Father to whom she had consecrated her life. She leaves us the witness of a Sister who knew how to incarnate and live the charism of the goodness of God and His provident care.