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Dearest Sisters,

We received the news that shortly after midnight last night, the Lord visited the intensive care unit of the House of Mercy Hospital in São Paulo, Brazil, to call to fullness of life our sister:

BERNARDIS ODILA – SR. JANICE
born in Cajobi (São Paulo), Brazil, on 23 March 1945.

From the moment she entered the Congregation, this dear sister expressed a profound love for the Pauline vocation, which was manifested in her great goodness, simplicity, openness and friendliness despite her shyness, dedication to the mission of the Institute, and sense of responsibility and commitment in carrying out the duties asked of her through obedience. With her whole being, she radiated her gratitude to the Lord for the gifts with which he had enriched her.

She entered the Congregation in the DM community in São Paulo on 22 Feb. 1963, and concluded her year of novitiate there with her first profession on 30 June 1968. On that occasion, she wrote: “I feel that the Lord wants me to be a religious, even though I have many limitations and need to improve greatly. But I strain forward, trusting in the grace of God.” As a young professed, Sr. Janice was an enthusiastic “propagandist” who took the Gospel to families, schools, institutes and offices in Uruguayana, Rio de Janeiro and Pelotas.

During her preparation for perpetual profession, which took place in 1974 in the Cidade Regina community, São Paulo, her heart overflowed with joy. “I am happy,” she wrote, “and with every passing day I feel more ‘Pauline.’ I realize that God loves me and I am more and more convinced that it is he who does everything. I accept whatever he wants and will strive to remain faithful to him until death.” The following year, she responded to an appeal by the Superior General to all the FSPs, expressing once again her yearning to remain faithful: “I was already convinced about this,” she affirmed, “but I want to reconfirm my certitude concerning the sublimity of the Pauline vocation: it is really worth it to commit myself totally to this mission. I am determined to continue my consecrated life with even greater love and self-donation, certain that God is faithful and that he wants me to be a Daughter of St. Paul.”

Sr. Janice worked for several years in the Curitiba book center. In 1987, she was asked to carry out the role of local bursar in the Divine Master community, São Paulo, and also to serve as administrator of Família Crista magazine. Afterward, she was appointed bursar of the Belo Horizonte-Turfa community—an office which she held for a number of years. Up until almost the end of her life, Sr. Janice was called to make a contribution to the economic and administrative sphere of the province. It was a role she fulfilled with competence, responsibility and precision. She helped the provincial bursar with financial matters such as the payment of suppliers from the central office; accompaniment and verification of the purchases of all the FSP communities of Brazil, supervision of the administration of SEPAC, the province’s House of Prayer, its central FSP offices and other important centers. She was an active and generous presence in the Divine Master community and, in the last ten years of her life, in the Thecla Merlo community (site of the province’s central offices), where she willingly carried out various community services, including that of sacristan.

Sr. Janice was passionate about life and very sensitive to all things beautiful. She had deeply assimilated the values of the Pauline charism, which she tried to communicate above all through the witness of her life to the younger sisters, toward whom she manifested special attention and care. She yearned to live the spirit of poverty in total dependence on God. Thanks to the values she lived, our sisters of Brazil consider her the “protector” of the province’s bursars.

In these last weeks, Sr. Janice’s ongoing lung problems were aggravated by Covid-19. She was admitted to the intensive care unit of the House of Mercy Hospital in São Paulo but none of the treatments she received were able to help her because at that point several of her vital organs were irreparably damaged. Her Bridegroom arrived silently, in the middle of the night, and we are sure that he found his bride ready to greet him, holding aloft her lamp of fidelity.

We are very close to our sisters of Brazil in this time of suffering and anxiety. May the Queen of Apostles continue to protect all humanity, so sorely tried by this pandemic, and may she help us enter into the mystery of the Cross of Christ so as to participate in the joy of his resurrection

Affectionately,

Sr. Anna Maria Parenzan

Rome, 7 July 2020