

## Our Centenarians in 2002

### SISTER STANISLAVA ZALAITÉ

April 23, 1898 – March 03, 2005 – FRANCE

Sister Stanislava Zalaite was one hundred four years old on the 23 of April 2002. She was born on that date in 1898. She is of Lithuanian origin. She entered the Congregation as a postulant on the 9<sup>th</sup> of January, 1931, in Meerssen, Holland and made her first vows on the 4 of August, 1933 in Paris. Her perpetual vows were pronounced on the 4 of August, 1936. She has lived in different communities: Yvetot, Paris, Chartres, ensuring services in the kitchen, dining-room, and looking after the ladies, jobs that she carried out with great dedication and love. Sister Stanislava, who is now (in 2002) 104 years old, is the oldest member of our Congregation.

Here is Sister Stanislava's witness of her life: "We were in Lithuania. One of our friends, Ona Kiblekaite wrote to us: 'We have found a Congregation where they do Adoration!' I was immediately attracted by that. Ona was young, but I was thirty years old. Under Russian domination for many years, I had never seen nuns. My parish priest said to me: 'That's not for you. Penniless and uneducated, it's out of the question!' We were four friends; each one of us wrote and we were accepted.

I entered the Congregation at Meerssen in the Netherlands. Sr. Clea was our guide for the French. In her small notebook she had words and phrases; the essentials were all there. However we used to have a good laugh when she schooled us in Lithuanian. We made our profession in Paris. This was followed by 20 years at Yvetot in Normandy, 30 years at Chartres. I had asked to live the last years of my life at Mende, but Sister Marie-Bertrand wanted me with her to take care for her. So together we went to St. Servan and then to Poitiers. That entailed quite a cost for me, but having Charity dwell in my heart was more important for me. That's how I learned to say: thank you, thank you, thank you for everything!"

The Good Mother was a fervent adorer! Adoration, night and day before the Blessed Sacrament; that was and is my greatest joy! At the beginning I thought everything was going to be easy, and that I would become a saint right away. But then I understood: nature is always there, and instead of growing, it diminishes... I speak to the Lord, I do not hear His response but He fills me! I must nourish life from within because quite often I am forgetful. Each day I need His Word, the Gospel. I harbor such a great love for the Gospel. Whenever I get discouraged I say to Him: "You are there!"

So very much do I pray that young people may take the time for prayer and never let themselves be absorbed by work... Life is difficult without God. In the people used to say quickly: 'God will punish you.' I now feel the immense presence of Charity. When I am not able to sleep at night I pray for those at work in other countries. I am interested in everything and never come to a full stop and just rest. In the morning I pray for everyone, but I always begin with the communities, the intentions of the Church, the Synod at Poitiers. The Rosary keeps me ever vigilant".

Sister Stanislava died on March 3, 2005, at Poitiers, France.