

MARIA ANTONIA VELASCO SS.CC. – ESPAÑA 1916 - 2009



On Saturday, March 28, at 6 am, our sister María Antonia Velasco exhaled her last breath, consuming so, the final surrender of his life in the hands of the Father. That has been her life as a Daughter of the Sacred Hearts: faithful and joyful surrender, generous, never denied an unconditionally "Fiat" to whatever the Lord has asked of her.

She was born in Madrid on March 11, 1916. She was a student of our college of Fuencarral (Madrid). At the start of the civil war in 1936, his parents disappeared: they had gone in the morning to make the queue to buy bread ... and never returned! A family friend was the last to see them on the street, surrounded by the milicians that had picked them and who were shouting "let them be killed, they are fascists, they have a Christ! For Maria Antonia and her brothers followed a lengthy and very painful time of useless research for their dear parents. Since that time she dedicated herself with immense affection and sense of responsibility to care for her siblings.

On July 9, 1942 she became Postulant in our house of Fuencarral. Escorial. Then went to El Escorial where she did her novitiate and pronounced her first vows on September 24, 1944. After some time spent to teaching she is send to our residence "Regina Pacis" to take care of the young university students.

On February 17, 1948 she made his final vows in Picpus. At her return to Spain a long period of generous service at government level begins for her. First as Superior of the communities of "Regina Pacis" (1948-1954) and Torrelavega (1954-1960). And from 1960 until January 1971 as Provincial of the Province of Spain. Her mandate marks our province with a strong time and two major axes: a time of intense renewal following the guidelines of Vatican II and a time of missionary expansion with the foundations of Paraguay (1965) and Congo (1969). She promotes also inside the Province a new style of communities, with emphasis on relationship and communion of persons. From this time date the foundations of Jaraiz de la Vera y Jerez de la Frontera. She also opened Cadiz where we started the collaboration with our Brothers.

At the end of her term as provincial and after a time spent in the formation of the Juniors, she was appointed Provincial Treasurer, a position in which she displayed a great practical talent, that she succeeded in offering - as everything else in his life - to the service of communion and Kingdom.

At her 71 years she freely volunteered herself for the foundation of Lisbon. Our Brothers, that had developed there an intense social work, had requested the assistance of the Sisters in a Residence for women. It was for Maria Antonia real happiness "to throw herself to the water" on a new and unfamiliar world, but most loved by her. it: The world of poverty, in this case in the concrete reality of her beloved abandoned old women.

In 1997 she was asked to leave Portugal and join the community of Jaraiz. She passed there six years dedicated to her sisters in community and as a nurse for the school children, making it with the same enthusiasm and love that had been put into each step and gesture of his long life. As she used to repeat "love has to be renewed every day."

In 2004, she finally reached the stage of rest in the Infirmary of El Escorial. Her strength was declining, her memory began to fade ... but she was still always worried about others, "to attend those who come to see us" by "giving something to the workers who are working on the house" ... And, especially, to surrender her time – long hours - to adoration before the Blessed Sacrament. Her movements were abandoning her also. In her last months, she passed many hours of stillness, of prayer, of contemplation of the landscape, sitting on the couch or in her wheelchair at the window of her room. But with impressive peace, without demanding anything, without complaining about anything, giving thanks for the care and attention she received from those who took care of her with much attention and care.

His distinctive style, her original way of being and doing transparented the SS.CC. charism and her very close family relationship with our Founders. Everything about the Congregation has always interested her very much: the sisters in other Provinces, the development of Provinces and Communities, the PPC ...

M^a Antonia has passed between us, "doing good". She has taught us a visceral commitment to the Gospel of Jesus with His compassionate and merciful Heart... Her life has always spoken to us about loyalty, perseverance, consistency, detachment, and good humour. Woman of deep-rooted convictions and had been right to give way at every stage, through a highly flexibility and capacity of adaptation to what was new. In her it became true day by day, what she promised at the moment of her profession. " ... *sister of the Congregation of the Sacred Hearts of Jesus and Mary in whose service I will to live and die.* "

María Paloma Aguirre ss.cc.