



Dear Sisters,

Today, August 10, 2020, in the DM community of Bogotá, at 7:35 AM local time, the Lord called our sister to the contemplation of the light of his face

SR. M. GABRIELA - LUZ MARIA FIESCO CUELLAR
born on June 4, 1953 in La Plata (Hulla) Columbia.

Luz Maria entered the Congregation in Bogotá on February 4, 1974, from a region of the Andes in which the environment and the culture contributed to a greater sensitivity toward silence and recollection. She was the third of 7 brothers and 2 sisters. Madre M. Lucia Ricci, Superior General at the time, noted in her regard: *«I find her convinced and capable of receiving the formation and being a good pious disciple. She has also made a great sacrifice in leaving her large family and younger brothers without their mother (she died in 1971), entrusting them to her sisters and sisters-in-law»* (August 13, 1976).

Following the regular novitiate, she made her religious profession on August 15, 1978, and she was pleased to receive the name of her deceased mother. She made her perpetual profession on August 15, 1984, always in Bogotá. In her request for admission to perpetual profession she affirms her awareness of her limitations, and that she is ready to fight to correct herself and *«to be faithful until death and until the final call of the Divine Master»*. The sisters responsible for the formation underscore her capacity for a progressive application to her duties, her interest in making progress in the fulfillment of her duties, her capacity for growth by taking advantage of every opportunity for learning. Her love for the Congregation is evident in her activity.

In a brief recollection, the Provincial Superior, Sr. M. Esperanza Jaimes Guerra, presents this sister as a very dynamic and active person, dedicating herself to the apostolate with diligence and with all of her energy. Various communities experienced her dedication in the sewing of vestments, in the kitchen, in embroidery: Bogotá, Quito, Medellín - where she was local superior for two terms, as well as Cucuta. In her correspondence with the superiors she referenced concrete events in her life, through which she perceived that the Lord was writing her story of salvation. There is an evident ecclesial spirit and attention to the social context as expressed in a letter from 1988 to M. M. Lucia Ricci: *«I am working in Medellín. I am happy, fighting in every way possible for the good of our community and of the local Church, in great need. Especially in this time of great violence, our mission is very much alive. We are happy to have three aspirants in our midst who share our life. For two months I am participating in a course on the Bible. I entrust myself to your prayer that I may reap the greatest benefits. It is very interesting. I say that the Lord is great and I am very small to respond to his great mercy. Therefore, I entrust myself to the Most Blessed Virgin that she may help me to be faithful until the end»* (Medellín, August 1988).

The diversity of ministries she fulfilled indicates the availability of Sr. M. Gabriela and her capacity to adapt to the various settings and to respond to the various duties entrusted to her in her journey of discipleship. It can be said that she built her life in goodness, with the same ability and dexterity with which she made the sacred vestments, purificators and corporals that would be used for the Eucharistic Celebration. She used capably those hands that would gradually become infirm and which in the later years would be elevated continually in prayer and suffering. Eight years ago, in fact, she was diagnosed with multiple sclerosis which, little by little, led to complete paralysis until she was bedridden.

In her journey of discipleship this sister manifested a great spirit for overcoming difficulties and trials. This was a capability that the Divine Master permitted her to learn throughout her existence. In the final years, hers was an apostolate of offering her infirmity, which required a great deal of patience and calm. She always accepted the manner in which the Lord wove her life. Aware of the reality of her situation, she wrote to Sr. M. Regina Cesarato (Superior General at the time): *«For my part, I am notifying you that my health has collapsed, but I am continuing to struggle and to give everything possible for the good of the Province and for the Glory of God»* (June 2015).

A pulmonary embolism brought her to the Father's House. "We feel the need to thank the Lord for the untiring offering and for the apostolate of suffering fulfilled by our sister Gabriela in our Province of Columbia/Ecuador, an apostolate that is fruitful for herself and for others. We pray that the Divine Master may receive her as his faithful bride and that Mary, Queen of the Apostles, may receive her as her beloved daughter, and that she may rejoice in the eternal glory of God the Father" (Sr. M. Esperanza Jaimes Guerra, Provincial Superior).

We unite ourselves in this prayer, convinced in the powerful intercession of our sisters who have reached the heavenly homeland. Sr. Maria Gabriela will certainly honor our beloved Mother Mary whose glorious Assumption into Heaven we will celebrate in a few days!

S. H. Paolo Mancini