



Dear Sisters,

Today, March 14, 2026, in the SANSUI-En Clinic (Hachioji, Japan), at 2:01 AM (local time), together with the Divine Master, his Disciple and our sister crossed the threshold of death:

**SR. M. LILIA – KAZU KONDO**  
**born on January 4, 1934, in Niitsu-Shi, Niigata-Ken (Japan).**

Kazu, a common name in Japan, was the second of 6 children. Her parents, who at Baptism had received the Christian names of Paolo and Maria, lived with the family in the prefect of Niigata on the western coast of the island of Honshu, which faces the Sea of Japan. Niigata is famous for its ski lifts, natural parks and thermal facilities. The young Kazu was raised in a natural environment of great beauty, forging her character that was decisive, but also reserved and creative. She would later undertake a specialized course in art and another in culinary art.

On December 24, 1952, at 18 years of age, Kazu received, with Baptism, the name of *Maria Johanna* and on October 25, 1953, she received the sacrament of Confirmation.

Through the gift of faith in Christ Jesus, there matured within her the desire for the consecrated life, and she entered our Congregation in Tokyo Mitaka DM on September 24, 1955. Upon completion of the year of Novitiate, she made her religious profession together with 4 other companions. It was March 25, 1959, the Solemnity of the Annunciation of the Lord. She made her perpetual profession on March 25, 1964, also in Tokyo.

Sr. M. Lilia began her mission as a Sister Disciple in the sacred art department in Tokyo Mitaka. In 1964, she was the Local Superior at Nagoya DM, and in 1967 she exercised the priestly ministry at the theological seminary of Osaka.

In 1969 she was assigned as the sister responsible for the Liturgical Apostolate Center in Tokyo DM and in 1970 she collaborated with the Pauline Bookstore while continuing to assist with our Centers. After a year of experience in the ceramics workshop (1973), she worked in the Archdiocesan Office of Tokyo (1974), before being sent to Rome-RA in Via Portunese (Italy) where she offered her precious collaboration in bookbinding, from 1975 until 1981. During this time she also learned the Italian language.

Upon her return to Japan, she worked in the painting workshop in Tokyo, coordinated the apostolate, and served as the Local Councilor for the community. In 1986 she was sent for priestly service at the Seminary of the Society of Saint Paul in Tokyo Ongata, and then as Local Superior at the Theological Seminary in Yokohama.

In 1991, she returned to the DM Community of Tokyo Hachioji, where she worked in the painting workshop and assisted with various services in the community. After a brief stay in Nagasaki (2002) and Hiroshima (2003), she returned to Tokyo (2005) where she continued to offer her collaboration of prayer and service for as long as her strength, and the help of the Lord, sustained her.



The grace of faith worked deeply in her throughout her life, and made her a true apostle. We recall briefly what Sr. M. Lilia wrote on January 23, 2001, for the edification of all and as a confirmation of the value of the great apostolic dedication of the sisters who worked in the Souvenir Centers at the Vatican, giving testimony to one of her experiences: «It is about a young Japanese woman. At 37 years of age, she had already undergone surgery for cancer. The wife of a lawyer, she also had two small children, and she was experiencing a great deal of interior restlessness. She was not a Christian and, despite this, she decided to join a group of pilgrims going to Rome for the Jubilee Year of 2000. In the Vatican, Divine Providence arranged that she met Sr. M. Regina Nakahasi, to whom she opened her heart, with her suffering, restlessness and hope. She listened and proclaimed the good news of Jesus Christ to her. Knowing that this woman was coming from Tokyo Hachioji, she suggested that she go to visit our community. Upon her return from Rome, she went to the Sister Disciples and was welcomed by them.

With confidence, she asked to continue the journey of evangelization begun in Rome and, the undersigned, in accord with her desire and request, accompanied her toward Baptism, just as Philip did in the account of the Acts of the Apostles. A short time later, when she required hospitalization due to the worsening of her sickness, on February 15, 2000, she received Baptism from the Parish Priest at Hachioji, receiving the name: *Maria Assunta*. Together with me there was the husband, some family friends, and many nurses from the hospital. After the Baptism, she appeared peaceful despite the great suffering. Her serenity enlightened and amazed those present. Maria Assunta said: “This is the most beautiful day of my life”. The luminosity and serenity of her face, her joy, was incisive and pervaded even those present, who felt that they were also participating in an intimate and indescribable purification.

After this day, I took care to bring her the Eucharist every day. This was a renewed joy for Maria Assunta, whom the Lord had guided by the mysterious ways of his loving plan. Maria Assunta, having become a Christian, crossed the threshold of death with Christ Jesus on February 22, five days after her Baptism. For her funeral, the parish church in Hachioji was filled with people and the testimony of the transformation of this young motherer was an authentic evangelization. Truly nothing is impossible for God!».

Sr. M. Lilia, a disciple and apostle of Jesus Master, completed her journey by accepting the trials reserved for the last stage of human life. In 2014, as a consequence of increasing senile dementia, she was admitted to the convalescent home for seniors *Sansui-en*, where she spent peaceful days together with two other sisters, who have already preceded her to eternal life.

Recently, when the Provincial Superior went to visit her, she was no longer speaking and she was unresponsive. During the month of January this year, she contracted Covid, which weakened her further and she was no longer able to nourish herself, leading into the terminal stage. The Lord called her to the heavenly banquet in his Kingdom following a long life in which she was offered many occasions to grow in faith, hope and charity.

Sr. M. Lilia, thank you for having shared your love for Christ Jesus, crucified and risen. Thank you for the gift of your life of discipleship that the Lord has brought to completion, precisely in this Lenten season that prepares us for Easter. Live in God, intercede for us and rest in peace!

Rome, March 15, 2026.

*Sr. M. Regina Cesarato*

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