

Sister Oliviera Maria van Mierlo (Barbara)

**Deceased on 31th October 2022 in Boxtel, The Netherlands
at the age of 88**

Born on 11th October 1934 in De Bilt, The Netherlands

**First Profession on 15th August 1963 in Esch, The
Netherlands**

Sister Oliviera was born on October 11, 1934 in a family with 4 sisters and 3 brothers in De Bilt. Later the family moved to The Hague. Her father was a Government Official of Social Affairs and her mother was taking care of the family. Oliviera was born with an open palate and was fed with a small teaspoon. At her 7th of age, she was operated and with a lot of speech therapy, she could improve her speech.

She followed the primary school in The Hague and went to the MULO in Leidschendam for 2 years. After that she learned still Domestic Science for another 2 years. Oliviera then obtained her nurse's diploma A in Amsterdam, with additional diplomas for maternity and district care. She also did a religion course for nurses and worked one year as district nurse in Dordrecht, situated in the south of the country.

She wished very much to be a missionary. When she heard of the congregation of the White Sisters, she felt that her wish would be fulfilled if she decided to follow her vocation.

At 14 July 1961 she joined the postulate of the White Sisters in Maarn, and its novitiate in Esch.

After her profession on August 15, 1963, she learned French in Toulouse and worked in the retirement home in Bayonne. In preparation for her work in Africa, she did an internship at the Duinendaal hospital in Boxtel.

Finally, Sr Oliviera left for Algeria in 1968, first to follow the **international formation year** and then to work at the mission posts **Djemma Saharidj and Aux Attafs**. Oliviera had a very hard time in the hospital of Aux Attafs, as she writes herself. Nobody spoke French, but only Arabic and she was hardly prepared for what awaited her, let alone receiving proper guidance. The nurse on duty went on a four months' vacation and renovations were underway at the same time. In the meantime, she had made her final vows for which her mother especially came to Algiers.

Unfortunately, this was short-lived. Two years later she got a heart attack. Sick and exhausted, she returned to the Netherlands, this meant the end of her stay in Africa. Unfortunately, due to her weak health, she was not able to contribute as a missionary for long and she dedicated her life to Our Lord in the Netherlands.

Once back in the Netherlands, Sister Oliviera was first hospitalized in Rotterdam for two months and then she was allowed to rest and recover further in the community of **Mook**. In 1972 she went to Sterksel and was the home nurse for Sister Veronica.

A few years later she worked in the nursing home of the Srs JMJ (Jesus Marie Joseph) in Cunera in Heeswijk. But again, the work proved too heavy for her.

Then she took care of a White Father in the presbytery of Lithoijen. She was very happy with the responsibility she was given, but when she worked in Arnhem in private nursing, she fell ill again and had to rehabilitate in Sterksel. She eventually stayed there for 8 years and helped in housekeeping and was a receptionist/hostess. She also was helping the pastor, a White Father who lived next door.

She also lived in the community in Den Bosch for another 2 years, where she was very happy.

In september 2000, she left for the residential care home in Boxtel, called Molenweide (the current Wereldhuis), There was already a community of White Sisters.

She has lived in Boxtel for more than 22 years, the last few years of which she lived in the Zonnestein department because of cognitive problems.

Sister Oliviera was a very sweet sister, who despite her weak mental and physical health, could also be very happy and content. She brightened up when she saw you coming and she loved to sing along with musician Denise.

She also loved Maria and went every week for years, on pilgrimage to 't Hofke of Maria in Berlicum. She also has fond memories of her trip to Lourdes with the Order of Malta.

Oliviera, we will miss your positivity and witty comments very much. It is a great pity that you are unable to attend your 60th Jubilee next year. May you rest in Peace. Amen.