

SISTER HENRIETTE SCHOORLEMMER (Henrica Maria)

Deceased on 13th Juli 2023 in Boxtel, The Netherlands

At the age of 101

Born on 3th October 1921 in Heeten, The Netherlands

First Profession on 31st of October 1947 in Esch, The Netherlands

Henriëtte would turn 102 years old on October 3rd and celebrate her 75th Jubilee on August 25th. This could no longer be the case. She was tired, very tired and wanted the Lord to come and take her. She was tired with her life and has been indicating this, more and more, she would like to go to Heaven. She now had started her last journey.

Henriette, was born in Heeten, near Raalte, into a deeply religious farming family with 6 children and two fosterchildren. Her Father had TBC and died at the age of 44. At that time she was 10 years old. Her mother had a busy family and it was difficult during the crisis, with a sick man and a farm.

Henriette wanted to go to secondary school, but unfortunately that was not possible as there was no money. She therefore went to work in the household of an uncle.

Partly, because of another uncle who was Father SVD in Indonesia, Henriette had at already an early age the desire to become a Sister Missionary.

After she had an intense experience of God, she decided on the advice of the pastor, to visit the White Sisters. Their simplicity and austerity really appealed to her and on September 9th 1946, she decided to enter the postulate "Sancta Monica" in Esch. The blind obedience and the constant having to memorize the Constitutions repelled her, but she persevered. She thought about her ultimate goal: to go to the mission in Africa.

After the Novitiate she made her First Profession on October 31, 1948 and went to SAINT CHARLES in Algeria to follow a year of ongoing time of Formation. She then went to Liverpool to follow a Course of Domestic Science and the English Language.

In 1951 she was appointed to Ndala, Tanzania, a new mission station in the middle of the jungle. This was an International Community what she liked, even though it was quite primitive and very difficult work. Later she started teaching Domestic Education to the girls at the large boarding school. Here too she had to improvise a lot and felt her lack of training. The lessons followed still at English standards and not African practice. There was also a lack of water and all kinds of other basic needs.

Her mother died in October 1962 and she was allowed to go home, but Henriette had deliberately decided to stay in Ndala, because of the final exams. She felt very responsible for the girls.

A year later she was asked to become a Provincial Bursar in Boxtel. She didn't really want to, but she did what was asked of her. Tanzania then still belonged to the Dutch Province. So after 12 years, she said goodbye to Ndala, to return to the Netherlands. In August of 1965 she went to Frascati for the Tertianship.

After 8 years in Boxtel, she was promoted to General Bursar in the Generalate in Rome. After a 6-year term, she suffered a nervous breakdown and was eager to return to the mission. Finally in 1978, she was able to return to Tanzania, now to Kasulu where she started doing pastoral work in the parish. Meanwhile Tanzania had become independent and much had changed within the Congregation due to the Vatican Council. More own opinion and no more habit. The living conditions in the community

had also improved greatly and people went out more often. The schools and hospitals had been handed over to the Africans.

After a complicated fracture of her leg, due to a fall with her 'piki piki' (Moped) in Tanzania, she had a big operation and rehabilitation in the Netherlands.

After that, Henriette returned to Kasulu. In 1986 she was transferred to Nkundi, where she worked with women for only 2 years before returning for good to the Netherlands in 1988. In 1989 she followed the special Session in Frascati for updated formation.

In February 1997, she went for two weeks to Duizel to follow the FARL Session. This was a special course about the new developments in religious life.

In 1989 she moved from Esch to the community in 's-Hertogenbosch (Duketown), but soon she was named as Superior of the community in Biezenmortel.

Unfortunately she had another serious accident, this time as the driver in an auto full of Sisters. She barely survived. After a long rehabilitation, she was finally able to enjoy her retirement in Esch at the age of 70. But once a missionary, always a missionary, so she started volunteering with refugees in Boxtel. She also visited sick and lonely people in Esch.

At the age of 80, Henriette came to live in WoonZorgcentrum Molenweide in Boxtel, the current "Wereldhuis". She lived here for almost 22 years, together with other sisters. She continued cycling and walking, and later riding her mobility scooter. She continued to grow with all the changes around her.

She kept up with the world news. Even though she herself felt that she had not achieved much in her life (as she writes in her book of life), she was grateful for everything she had experienced. She felt carried by an invisible Presence. She was innerly free and experienced a deep peace. For her, the good relations she had had with the people of Africa and all the other people around her were the most important thing.

In the end she was very tired, dead tired, and her longing for the Lord grew stronger and stronger. The increasing dependence on care was something she found difficult to accept. She thanked everyone for her long and beautiful life.

Dear Henriette; we in turn, thank you for your wisdom and your ever-loving presence. We are sorry that you were not able to celebrate your 75th Profession Jubilee on August 25th, together with your cousin Maria Schoorlemmer. You yourself were not so bothered by this....

May you Rest in Peace and in the Eternal Love of the Lord. We are going to miss you very much.