

In Memoriam Sr Tiny Hölscher

Tiny was born in The Hague as the second in a close-knit, warm and religious family with eight children. They had a good life at home and regularly went with father and mother to the woods and beaches in the vicinity of Rijswijk and Scheveningen. After a short time in Amstelveen near Schiphol, they moved to Amsterdam at the beginning of the second worldwar, where it would be a bit safer.

Here Tiny went to the MULO in the Jordaan and in 1944 she got her diploma. She wanted to become a teacher. But due to her mother's illness, the hunger winter and anxious times in the last year of the war, it did not happen. She did, however, obtain her middle-class and commercial diploma.

After the war, the family moved back to Amstelveen. Through an aunt who was in the convent, Tiny was made aware of the White Sisters, because she insisted on going to the mission. She had that idea in her head early on. She trained as a teacher through a correspondence course, which she did in addition to the busy family household. She then went to training school in Amsterdam for another year, before joining the White Sisters in Maarn as a postulant in 1952. Here she immediately felt at home.

In 1954 she left Sancta Monica in Esch for Algiers for the international formation year. Her brother Jan, who worked on a ship, came here to visit her. After a brief introduction to the English education system in England, Tiny was sent to a boarding school in Nabingo, Uganda for 6 months in '56. Here she learned English in practice. She was then sent to Ilondala in Zambia (then North-Rhodesia), where she taught at a girls' school and made home visits on a bicycle. After 2 years she was transferred to Karema in Tanzania, where she became head of a girls' school. This was located on Lake Tanganyika, so all transport was by boat. Here she learned Ki Swahili and worked very well with the Tanzanian sisters and teachers. The following year, the school moved

to Sumbawanga and she made her perpetual profession there. It made a big impression on the schoolgirls. The independence of Tanzania in '61 was a milestone for everyone, as for Tiny.

After about 5 years, the school was transferred to an African daughter congregation and Tiny left for Chala, where after two years she also transferred the school to a local congregation. After 11 years in Africa, Tiny was allowed to go on leave to the Netherlands for the first time in '66, she finally saw her family again and could rest a bit. A lot had changed in the Netherlands, especially after the Second Vatican Council. After her vacation, she was appointed for Kenya as novice mistress of a young African sister congregation. Here she had to reorganize things again into a 'new style' novitiate. It was a huge challenge, but she was very happy there. In '73 these Assumption Sisters became completely independent.

After this she went to London for 2 years to work on a new trainingprogramme for our own candidates and young sisters. In '75 Tiny was elected provincial superior of the Netherlands. Here she initiated the change and move to other religious retirement homes and nursing homes, because the congregation could no longer take care of the elderly sisters itself. This was not easy, but in the end everyone ended up well and still felt like missionaries within a Dutch setting.

After the death of her father, which caused Tiny a lot of grief, she went back to Kenya. She was asked to set up a training center and conference center here where religious from all kinds of congregations could come for formation and further training. Not soon after, her mother also died. In '87 she became Provincial Superior for Kenya, Uganda and Ethiopia. The latter country in particular was dangerous and very difficult to travel.

In 1990, Tiny had a sabbatical year and went to study the Bible at a university in Chicago, USA. Here she met her brother Frans who was

working in Texas as a missionary. After this study, Tiny returned to Tanzania where she again set up a study program for African congregations, this time in different locations, including Kenya. She travelled a lot again.

For the 2nd time she became superior of the Netherlands again in 2001. Now her task was to dissolve several communities and to sell the convent Sancta Monica in Esch. The sisters moved to the carehome Molenweide in Boxtel or convent Terhaghe in Eindhoven. The Regional Office of NL remained in the Prins Bernardstraat in Boxtel.

After she was no longer superior in 2007, Tiny went to live in the apartments of the Molenhof, for the first time alone and completely independently, which took some getting used to! She got some more time for her family and acquaintances. She gave lectures and did a lot of translation work for the congregation. She also travelled to several meetings and chapters and played the organ in the chapel. In mid-'21 she moved to the carehome Wereldhuis (former Molenweide), she felt very much at home here.

Tiny has been fully committed to her own congregation and the formation of young sisters, and also to the development and independence of new African sister congregations. She made sure that all older sisters in the Netherlands received good shelter and good care. The charism and history of the White Sisters was worth a lot to her and she continued to insist on this. She read all the policy documents until she couldn't anymore. She made PowerPoint presentations and emailed away. In the end, she had more and more trouble expressing herself, much to her frustration. She was grateful for the opportunities she was given and the many countries she saw. She was 96 years old and celebrated her 70th anniversary last year. Dear Tiny, we will dearly miss you and wish you Eternal Peace with the Lord. Amen.