



Dear Sisters,

Today, August 21, 2024, in Nemcare Hospital in Guwahati (India), the Divine Master visited the Province of India and, at 9:30 AM local time, called to himself our sister

SR. M. NORBERTHA – NORBERTHA EKKA
born on August 17, 1955, in Darjeeling (India).

This city located in West Bengal State and with an altitude of 2,037 meters, forms part of the first slopes of the Himalayas. Thus Norbertha grew up having before her eyes the highest peaks of the highest mountain range on earth. This natural setting contributed to making her a person who loved the interior life, silence, and contemplation. The Lord gave her the gift of calling her to eternal life from a community that is fairly close to the area of her birth and the place in which she received the gift of Baptism on March 27, 1959.

Norbertha entered the Congregation of the Sister Disciples in Mumbai on March 6, 1975, at the promising age of twenty, and it was here that she took her first steps toward religious consecration. Following the novitiate, she made her first profession there on August 15, 1979, while she made her perpetual profession on August 15, 1985, in Bangalore. The reports from those responsible for her initial formation indicate a spirit of prayer, generosity, a sincere love for Jesus Master and her neighbor.

Among her first apostolic experiences, in 1979, there is the collaboration with the Society of Saint Paul in the community of Allahabad that helped her to grow in the sense of belonging to the Pauline Family. In 1980 she was sent to the House of Prayer in Kohima (Nagaland), at the beginning of the foundation in this final frontier of India located in the northeast part of the country. Sr. M. Norbertha offered the gift of her sensibility for hospitality and was ready to face the sacrifices always required in new apostolic initiatives. In 1983 she was sent to Mumbai as a collaborator at the Liturgical Apostolate Center and, in 1986, offered her contribution in Delhi at the Apostolic Nuntiature. Then, for a long period, from 1991 to 2005, she would give her contribution in ecclesiastical tailoring in Bangalore. In 2005 she returned to Kohima and was then sent first to Chennai then to Bangalore and, in April of this year, to Guwahati, in the sewing workroom.

At the beginning of her consecrated life as a Sister Disciple, writing to the Mother General at that time, Sr. M. Nobertha clearly manifested the essential coordinates of her life:

- *I am very grateful to the Lord that he has called me: He will guide me until the end.*



- *The Lord has called me in this Congregation to do his will.*
- *Through our Eucharistic apostolate, especially the adoration, we can communicate Jesus to others (Allahabad, 01.11.1979).*

In other writings she affirmed: «I promise to be faithful to God's call with the help of his grace and with my docility» and, with regard to fidelity, she confirmed the decision to arrive “*up to the end*” that is to persevere to the end!

Together with the joy expressed and manifested in simplicity, Sr. M. Norbertha demonstrated herself to be particularly attentive, caring, tactful and gentle with the people she encountered. These characteristics contributed toward making her a pleasant person with whom to live. She was able to collaborate with any sister, in her generous amiability. This is also the testimony that we received from the sisters of the Province of India, who affirm how much Sr. M. Norbertha loved the vocation and mission of the Sister Disciple. Even when she was very busy, she never left aside the Eucharistic adoration that nourished an intense prayerlife united with charity, especially toward the sick.

During these days, the fraternal visit of the Provincial Superior and her Councilor is taking place in the community of Guwahati. Sr M. Norbertha participated in all of the personal and community encounters. Already suffering from heart issues, yesterday, August 20, during an animation encounter, she was surprised by a sudden illness that required an urgent recovery in the hospital where, today, her earthly pilgrimage ended due to a syndrome of multi-organ failure.

We love to think that the offering of her life, received by the tenderness of God, is a special gift for the vocations in India. The circumstances of the community and the fraternal visit, during which this unexpected passage of Sr. M. Norbertha through death to eternity bears witness to the precious nature of the presence of every sister.

In addition, the coincidence with the 110 years from the foundation of the Pauline Family, associates this Sister Disciple, evangelically small and rich in love, to the intercessory prayer of Jesus Master and of the Church for the apostolic fecundity of the new evangelization.

We accept with faith the calls to the eternal wedding banquet that the Lord continues to send to every part of the Congregation. We entrust to these sisters who are concluding their journey, to intercede for all of us who continue on our earthly pilgrimage, in holiness and in the apostolate, following Jesus Master, Way, Truth and Life.

Sr. M. Norbertha, thank you for the gift of your life in our Congregation. Rest in peace!

Rome, August 21, 2024



Sr. M. Paola Mancini