



OBITUARY NOTICE



Sister Florentina Masotsa
Catherine Marie

entered Eternal Life on August 1st, 2020
at the age of 84 years
and 60 years of religious life.

+ 2983

'I am all thine, O Immaculate Heart of Mary! Spark! Ignite me with your love! - (from Brochure of Garment of Grace- Brown Scapular)

Sister Florentina Masotsa's life was thoroughly permeated by her devotion to the Blessed Virgin Mary. "I am all yours, O Immaculate Heart of Mary". This statement seems to befit her totally. Despite her many health problems, she dedicated her life to spreading and strengthening the message of Marian love and devotion.

Florentina was born in Maseru on February 16, 1937. Her parents were Mr. Oliviri Martin and Mrs. Mamotleleng Virginia. She was originally a Mosotho born in Lesotho, but was later nationalized as a South African citizen because her parents emigrated to this neighboring country.

This beloved daughter was born with a heart condition. In fact, she was baptized on condition at home just after birth because no one believed she would survive. But two days afterwards, she was taken to the parish church where she was solemnly baptized by the priest. However, her health would remain fragile throughout her life.

It was fifteen years later that Florentina made her First Communion and her Confirmation in 1952, in Bloemfontein, in the Republic of South Africa where her parents had established because it is where they had found gainful employment.

Already at a very young age, her relationship with Mary was remarkable. This devotion was instilled by her grandmother, a fervent Catholic, who was her guardian at the time. Her parents could not be present in the household then since were obliged to leave to seek livelihood elsewhere.

Father Temperman, an Oblate of Missionary of Mary Immaculate and parish priest who also had a contagious love for the Blessed Virgin contributed in helping Florentina to deepen her relationship with Mary. Florentina attended primary school from 1947 to 1952. Five years later, as a teenager, she met the Franciscan Sisters for the first time. It was love at first sight. She immediately knew she would become a Sister! She joined them in 1954, but God had other plans for her. After a few episodes of health problems, she had to return to her family.

Back in her hometown in Lesotho, she was led again by Father Temperman, her spiritual mentor, to Our Lady of Pontmain Convent

where she joined the Congregation of the Sisters of Charity of Ottawa. Here, in this same convent, she met Sister Agnes Marie Dingaana, who was also guided by the same spiritual director, Father Temperman.

She pronounced her temporary vows in 1958 and her perpetual vows in 1960. After serving at the Lady of Pontmain Convent with remarkable apostolic zeal, she left to settle at the Notre-Dame de Lourdes Convent for the next four years. Her first apostolic mission was filled with challenges when it came to pastoral activities within the parish. These resulted from many conflicts that could not be solved. When Sister Florentina left, the mission came to an end. This was at a time when the Catholic Church in general was in turmoil over the changes brought about by the Vatican II Council. However, a few years later, the Congregation summoned Sister Florentina again to Our Lady of Lourdes Convent.

A true missionary at heart Sister Florentina never missed an opportunity to encourage a prayerful devotion to Mary among both children and adults. She faithfully spread her message of love for the Blessed Virgin while animating groups in all the parishes where she resided, including the Legion of Mary founded by the internationally acclaimed "Pioneer of the laity", Frank Duff.

Gifted with a strong will and determination, Sister Florentina succeeded in acquiring an honourable level of education and she relentlessly pursued her ongoing education thereafter.

She worked tirelessly for admission to prestigious colleges such as St. Augustine's Seminary in Roma where she obtained a diploma in pastoral catechesis and followed a series of mini-courses offered by Ministries of the Word from Zimbabwe. She was also a dedicated member of the Christian Life Community, a group of Ignatian spirituality. In many regards, through her various experiences and her constant interest in learning furthermore she was able to refine her skills and put to good use the many certificates she obtained over the years. It is not surprising that she has excelled so much in her work!

Sister Florentina exercised her apostolate in various fields. She worked as a nurse aid at the Paray Mission Hospital, as a teacher at Guardian Angel Primary School in Pontmain, but mostly as a pastoral worker in different areas and missions in Lesotho and in the Republic of South Africa.

She was renowned as a courageous, pious woman who had community development and love for the poor at heart. It was prompted by compassion that she set up a sewing school for them in the Jeanne Emmanuel area even before a convent was built in that village.

To everyone's surprise, the foresightful care of God's Divine Providence accompanied Sister Florentina up to her eighty-fourth birthday despite all predictions from her early years because of her frail health. But on August 1st, 2020, she was taken from us and brought to the Realm of eternal Peace and Love.

God's decisions are unfathomable, his ways are inscrutable! (Rm 11, 33)

Although we miss her greatly, we find consolation in the joyful thought of her having been welcomed Home by the Virgin Mary whom she loved so fervently!

