



OBITUARY NOTICE



SISTER LUCIA LESIEA
MARIE ODILIA

Entered eternal life on November 11, 2020
At the age of 79
and 59 years of religious life

+3014

I say to you, rejoice in the Lord always, pray continually, give thanks in all circumstances, because this is God's will for you in Jesus Christ! (1Thes.5:16-18)

Lucia Mokhothatsi Lesiea is born on September 25, 1942. Daughter of Michael Malebo and Maria 'Matlali, she is the third of a family of six children. Her parents, who had immigrated to South Africa, work on *Boer* farms. Her baptism is celebrated in 1943 and she receives her Confirmation in 1952 in Dewesdorp.

While attending Rocklands Primary School, Lucia meets the Sisters of Francis Assisi. Her great admiration for the Franciscan Sisters helps her to develop a deep relationship with the Virgin Mary and she happily joins the Sodality of 'Children of Mary'.

Later on, she joins the Congregation. She admits that what first attracted her was their habits. After some time, for an unknown reason, the Sisters recommend that she consider different other Congregations to discern which life style could suit her best. This advice would later be perceived as inspired by Divine Providence.

Father Temperman, o.m.i, introduces her to the Grey Nuns of the Cross and even accompanies her to Our Lady of Pontmain Convent. Lucia decides to stay although living in Pontmain will require more efforts for her to adapt. Nevertheless, she decides to join the Grey Nuns in 1959. The authorities at the time see great qualities in her and accept her request to join the Congregation. She pronounces her temporary vows in 1961 and will from then on be known as Sr. Marie Odilia. She seals her engagement through perpetual vows in 1966.

Sr. Marie Odilia is first assigned to work as a cook in the kitchen of Our Lady of Pontmain Convent from 1961 to 1962. Afterwards, she is assigned to a rectory in Attredgeville where she pursues her work as a cook for 10 years, from 1963 to 1973.

When this contract is terminated, Sister Marie Odilia is ready for a new challenge. She is directed to a new mission field and is sent to Paray Mission Hospital as a health care worker. As the true daughter of Élisabeth Bruyère, she accepts her obedience in a spirit of faith and confidence and devotes herself entirely to the task. She likes to be of service and Sr. Maria Annunciata, who manages the hospital at the time, praises her: "*Sr. Maria Odilia perfectly meets the requirements of her role as a care giver and this beyond my expectations. She is even entrusted with the delicate task of seeing to the development of x-rays and does her work with meticulousness.*"

Although she loves her work at Paray hospital, her help is needed at the Catholic African Women's Union (Sodality of St Anne) in the Diocese of Port Elizabeth in South Africa. From 1980 until her retirement, Sr. Marie Odilia embraces her new role as a pastoral agent. This new function allows her to experience life in a larger community. She, who had always lived with just a few Sisters, now finds herself living within a large group, a new experience which she fully enjoys and appreciates.

Even when retired, Sr. Marie Odilia takes on other responsibilities; she is an animator within various communities in different convents of the Congregation and also offers her services at St Claire Convent in the Diocese of Maseru. Finally, she finishes her journey at Our Lady of Pontmain where she manages employees in the kitchen and in the orchard garden.

Her way of living her religious life and her many commitments reflect a deep love for her companions and all those she encounters. Wherever Sister Marie Odilia lives or serves, she is recognized and admired for her zeal for work well done, her tidiness, her sense of responsibility, and above all, for her prayerful life, her strength, humility and charity. She is greatly appreciated and loved wherever she goes.

Younger Sisters affectionately call her 'Maoli' in honor of her name 'Odilia' which means "Praise God" and "fortunate in battle". Pain in her knees never prevented Sr. Marie Odilia from attending church and listening to the children's choir. Moreover, everyone takes pleasure in listening to her, singing with all her heart, either at church or during her many spiritual animations.

She leaves as a legacy to all of us Sisters: her great strength in faith!

"Go in peace Maoli, daughter of Élisabeth Bruyère, the great event Organizer!"

