

HERMANAS DE SANTA ANA

Delegación "Divina Providencia"

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PERÚ

Huachipa, 28th November 2021



***"Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life,
and I shall dwell in the house of the Lord my whole life long". (Ps 22: 6)***

Dearest Sisters,

On 6th November, the first Saturday of the month dedicated to the Blessed Virgin Mary, around 6.00 p.m., at the hospital of *María Auxiliadora, Lima*, our dear Sr. Sonia surrendered her life into the hands of the Father as she had done, like a faithful servant, by serving and giving herself until the last moment.

Sister Sonia Elena Laredo De La Cruz was born in Nazca (ICA) on 2nd December 1962, to late Silvestre Laredo and late Francisca De La Cruz. She was the third of five siblings, one of whom died two years ago, one brother and one sister reside in Italy and another sister lives in Peru.

After completing Secondary School education, she obtained the degree of Social Worker at the University *Federico Villareal, Lima*, and began her profession as a Social Worker at the *Federico Villareal National School, Miraflores* and also at the *Sagrado Corazón School, Chalet de Chorrillos*. She manifested her spirit of service by engaging in the social activities of her Parish, *Cristo Misionario del Padre*. As a young catechist and a promoter of the Youth Ministry, she dedicated herself with determination, creativity and love, as stated by Fr. Conrado, who had accompanied Sr. Sonia before she entered our Congregation: ***"She was a great wealth in the life of those of us who related with her; we enjoyed her simplicity, her smile, her love and her unconditional dedication to the Lord, her spirit of service and her great witness as a young catechist. Now it is up to us to make a full offering of her life to the Lord. It is tough, but we must do it with the same generosity with which He gave her to us... we will remember her with affection as a special sister"***.

- * In April 1989, at the age of 26, Sr. Sonia joined our Religious Family, beginning her journey of aspirancy;
- * on 8th March 1990, she entered the Postulancy, starting her formative itinerary in the Formation House of Cañete;
- * on 7th March 1991, she entered the Novitiate;
- * on 8th March 1993, she made her First Profession;
- * and on 8th March 1999, the Perpetual Profession.

She completed her formation in the International Juniorate, in Rome, where she remained for 4 years, studying at the Pontifical Urbaniana University, and obtained the Licentiate in Philosophy.

After returning to Peru, she pursued her higher studies to obtain the Diploma of *Teacher of Religious Education* and carried out her service as an educator like a mother, who loves, accompanies and foresees, seeking the good of her daughters, in fact, her past pupils remember her with much affection, esteem and gratitude.

Her great ability to listen and to welcome, her prudence and her wisdom stood out as very profound qualities in her, for this reason she was entrusted with the service of accompanying the

Aspirants in 1998 and then that of Mistress of Postulants and Novices in 2000-2001, subsequently as Mistress of Novices in 2004-2006 and Junior Mistress in 2012-2013.

She also served as Superior in various Communities, where, with courage and diligence she took care of the Sisters entrusted to her: she was the animator of the Community by example and prayer, all of us admired her great ability to listen and her gestures of fraternity.

She had a very special way in approaching the neediest, always seeking their good and helping the young people to think with their minds and hearts. Fr. Miguel Chumpitaz, current Vicar of the Prelature of Cañete, remembers with admiration, the years in which Sr. Sonia led the youth group, to which he had belonged: ***“She always respected our freedom and our initiatives, and at the same time she asked us to give the best of ourselves. I think it was the first seed that I could perceive, to dedicate my life to the Priesthood, since it was the first time I had met a consecrated person, with that youthful and joyful spirit, with an open heart, she made no distinction between people, she was serene and understanding. I don't remember ever seeing her upset, despite our errors or mistakes. She always encouraged us and also rewarded our work with some gifts”.***

In the year 2018, she was called to carry out the service of the Delegate Superior of Mother General in this Delegation of Peru, a service lived with simplicity, gentleness and patience. She was a woman of listening and prayer, whose fruit was translated into gestures of benevolence and fraternity, always attentive to the spiritual and human well-being of each one.

The girls of the Casa Hogar Santa Ana had a special place in her heart and she dedicated herself to them with great care. They thus wished her goodbye: ***“There is something very great and beautiful that you have taught us: LOVE FOR JESUS in the Eucharist. You told us that we had to enter the chapel with recollection and great respect, because there was a very important person, who was Jesus. You were always concerned about our spiritual life, and despite the many works you had at school, you always had time for us. As is customary, every Saturday after general cleaning, we prayed the rosary together in a very creative way. Through meaningful songs and videos, you always looked for strategies to strengthen our love for Jesus. You are a person who has left many marks in us and in many young girls who have returned to their families. Many times we saw you tired but you never let yourself be overcome by fatigue, you always gave your best and this made you happy”.***

She was a Sister of great artistic talent, her flower arrangements for the Blessed Sacrament were precious, her drawings and Christmas compositions denoted a profound inner beauty.

She participated in the XXXIV General Chapter in Rome, and returned to Peru full of enthusiasm to continue and to put into practice what the Congregation had traced out as a path for ***being a family for families and this is how the Lord found her on the way trying to “create a family”***, full of delicacy for her Sisters, full of dreams and hopes.

On 14th October around 7.15 a.m., while on her way from Cañete to Lima to meet some Sisters of the *Congregation of the Daughters of Jesus the Good Shepherd* (founded by our own Foundress) and to take them to our Delegation House in Huachipa, she and the driver - our dear friend and collaborator, Mr. Alberto Vicente, met with a tragic accident in which he died on the spot.

On that road, more than a tragic accident, the Lord found her, yet again, to ask her for the total offering of her life. She was taken to the hospital where, what medical science could do, was done. For 24 days, dearest Sr. Sonia lay between life and death, living the Passover of the Lord, like Christ sacrificed on the altar of the cross.

Our spiritual Sisters, the Daughters of Jesus the Good Shepherd, during the days when Sr. Sonia was in the hospital, wrote: ***“Our desire was to meet and to share the experiences of apostolate, mission, spirituality and lunch. And God wanted our encounter to be deeper, through suffering, which crossed the frontiers not only of the Communities of Peru, but also of the 2 Congregations, starting with our Mothers General. Just as our Founders were always united, like one Heart, all the Communities of the Daughters of Jesus the Good Shepherd are united with you in prayer. The Delegate of Mexico informed me that the Mass, Lauds, Rosary, Vespers and the prayer of our Founders, are offered every day for the good health of Sr. Sonia and for each of the Sisters of St. Ann”.***

We all asked for the miracle of physical life, but the Lord wanted to grant us the miracle of spiritual life: how many people gathered to pray: families, groups, bishops, priests, religious congregations, children, young people... Love united us.

The funeral took place on 8th November, at the Shrine of the *Madonna dell'Amor Hermoso (Our Lady of Beautiful Love)*, where the mortal remains of Sr. Sonia arrived after a journey that had begun the day before, with a first stop at the Delegation House in Huachipa and then in her native place. On the night between the 7th and 8th November a night vigil was held in the Community chapel of the Novitiate and after having made a stop in the other Communities of Cañete, they arrived at the Shrine, where the funeral Mass was presided over by Mons. Ricardo García García, Bishop-Prelate of Yauyos-Cañete. The mortal remains of our dear Sr. Sonia now rest in the Municipal Cemetery of San Vicente de Cañete.

We want to remember our Sr. Sonia thus, as a Sister who gathers her Sisters around the Beloved, alongside the little ones, in an atmosphere of silence, so that God alone may speak and make us understand how beautiful it is to live for Heaven. We pray that *Our Lady of Beautiful Love* be with her and that St. Ann, Blessed Enrichetta and our Venerable Founders intercede for each of us, so that we may be faithful to the Plan of the Good God.

INFINITE THANKS to our Mother Francesca, who accompanied us with her prayer and spiritual support, thanks to Sr. Fátima because she was concretely close to us in the days of trial, thanks to each of you, dear Sisters: we felt your presence through prayer and affection; thanks to the LASA Group, for joining us. Our desire is to continue to be united through the lively hope of ***being a family for families***.

With love and gratitude

Sr. Marlene Cuya Chumpitaz
Delegate Superior *ad interim*