



Dearest Sisters,

On August 17th at 12:29 a.m. (local time), in the community of the Provincial House in Pasay City, Philippines, the Lord of Life welcomed into his house of light, our sister

MALATA VICENTA VIOLETA Sr. MARIA LILIA
born in Sandalan Ibaan, Batangas, Philippines on April 5, 1945

Like a red thread running through the entire life of this dear sister, beginning with her earliest years of formation, was her great desire to be a missionary *ad gentes*: to leave her homeland, encounter other peoples, and bring the joy of the Gospel to everyone.

Sr. M. Lilia entered the congregation in Pasay City on November 17, 1963. On June 30, 1968, at the end of her novitiate year, she made first profession in Lipa and then devoted herself with great zeal to spreading the Gospel throughout the vast metropolis of Manila. She carried Africa in her heart, but with complete availability she embraced the ministry of itinerant evangelization in the dioceses of Lipa, Naga, Legazpi, Cebu, and Tuguegarao. After completing several courses and earning a diploma in social communications, she produced radio programs in Tuguegarao and later in Naga and Olongapo. She also served as local superior in Olongapo for three years.

In 1998, Sr. M. Lilia received that long-awaited gift, the grace of being sent as a missionary to Papua New Guinea, the largest of the Melanesian nations, which at the time was experiencing political instability marked by violence and corruption. It was not the Africa she had longed for, but a country greatly in need of the light of the Gospel. Shortly after arriving in Port Moresby, she wrote: "I am happy to be here, and this is where the Lord wants me to be... I am happy to be able to leave my beloved country to live the missionary life...."

In Papua New Guinea, Sr. M. Lilia devoted herself to the diffusion apostolate through the book center, served as director of the Institute of Communication, produced radio and television programs, and led media seminars. As she herself wrote, she was truly *proud to be a Daughter of St. Paul!*

In 2001, her dream of serving the people of Africa was finally fulfilled. In Kampala, Uganda, Juba, South Sudan, and Nairobi, Kenya, Sr. M. Lilia devoted herself passionately to proclaiming the Gospel through the large, well-stocked book centers, as well as through visits to parishes and schools, happy to be a messenger of peace to all. She was tireless, always attentive to the needs of the communities and always ready to travel thousands of kilometers to bring everyone the saving Word. In 2009, Sr. M. Lilia expressed to Sr. M. Antonietta Bruscati her joy, while also sharing her availability to go wherever the need was greatest: "I willingly offer myself even to be sent elsewhere because I have heard that there are other circumscriptions in need...."

But the Lord had another mission waiting for her, that of suffering and illness. In 2013, Sr. M. Lilia was diagnosed with breast cancer. After appropriate treatment, however, she was still able to continue the apostolate in the communities of Cagayan de Oro, Iloilo, Cebu, and Lipa. Her surrender into God's hands was genuine, and despite her illness, she continued to encourage others, anticipate the needs of her sisters, spreading joy and serenity, and communicating warmth through her radiant smile.

In 2024, the cancer returned with renewed aggressiveness, and neither chemotherapy nor radiation therapy was able to stop its progression. During the night, Sr. M. Lilia was called to join the Pauline Family in heaven, there to rejoice in and savor forever the "immeasurable riches of God's grace" that had already surrounded her life here on earth.

Affectionately,

Rome, August 17, 2026


Sr. Anna Maria Parenzan