

SISTER VERONICA RIBAS

(May 29, 1917 - March 17, 1962)

Sister Veronica Ribas, child of Sancha Ribas and Mary dos-Anjos Ribas, was born in San Francisco, in the northern section of the State of Minas Gerais, Brasil, on May 29, 1917. She was baptized on June 30, and given the name of Hildette.

After elementary school, Hildette attended high and normal school at Our Lady of Sorrows, in Diamantina, from which she was graduated in 1935.

In 1942, when the Sisters of St. John the Baptist accepted the direction of the new high school in Pirapora, Hildette was teaching in one of the local schools. Soon she became friendly with the Sisters and expressed her desire to enter our Congregation. After a few months, she was admitted to the postulate. On June 24, 1943, Hildette, radiant with joy, received the holy habit of the Congregation and was called Sister Veronica. On June 25, 1944, she pronounced with fervor and love, the three vows of poverty, chastity and obedience, thus realizing a long-cherished dream.

The Superiors of the Congregation, detecting in Sister Veronica a special love for children, gave her charge of the kindergarten class. Possessed of a lively character, Sister Veronica enjoyed teaching the little ones and was particularly fond of the orphan girls whom she instructed in Christian doctrine and who often became her loving charges. She also taught in the elementary school which was later established at San Francisco, becoming then its enlightening and intelligent principal.

At the beginning of 1962, Sister Veronica was transferred to Belo Horizonte where the orphanage had also been transferred previously. There she continued her dual role of elementary school teacher and principal with zest and indefatigable zeal.

At the beginning of the school year, Sister Veronica became ill, suffering from complete exhaustion which rendered her incapable of fulfilling her manifold duties. Doctors prescribed complete rest and special treatment but to no avail. Sister Veronica's own brother, a competent physician, was called in for consultation, and then other doctors made the diagnosis which revealed a tumor in the abdomen. While immediate surgery was advised, a lesion of the heart, heretofore undiscovered, made it impossible so that, while at the hospital, Sister Veronica lay between life and death. The physicians in attendance used all the means available to overcome the danger of immediate death.

The Sister nurse in charge reports that the day before her death, Sister Veronica was placed in an oxygen tent so that she would be able to receive Holy Communion the following morning. She welcomed the Eucharistic Lord into her soul, with perfect lucidity. After a little rest Sister was taken to the X-ray room where she suffered a cardiac collapse.

The hospital chaplain was summoned immediately to administer Extreme

Unction, and at 8 o'clock, on the morning of March 17, 1962, Sister Veronica went to meet her heavenly Bridegroom.

Sister Veronica Ribas had a special love for the Immaculate Virgin and was particularly devoted to St. Joseph. We consider it a special grace that her death occurred after receiving Holy Viaticum, on a Saturday, during the novena to the Great Patriarch of the Universal Church. The Congregation remembers Sister Veronica as a docile, patient, devout religious whose life edified her fellow Sisters. They deeply feel the loss caused by her premature death.

MAY SHE REST IN PEACE!