



## *Sisters of St. Francis of Mary Immaculate*

Early in the morning of December 4, 2014, our Brazilian Sister Luzia Aparecida Daniel, a lifelong ambassador of Gospel joy, completed her amazing eighty year journey home to God. How appropriate was the timing of her departing since throughout her life, and especially in her final days, she embodied the Advent prayer: "My heart seeks your face, O God; come and do not delay."

On January 1, 1934, Luzia Aparecida Daniel was born in the town of Santa Cruz das Palmeiras, in the state of São Paulo, Brazil. She was the only child of her loving parents, Avelino Daniel and Marian de Lima, immigrants from Southern Italy who had arrived in Brazil the previous year. By the time she was four years old, Luzia had lost both of her parents to death. In early childhood, she also lost her eye sight due to a medical error. Orphaned and blind, Luzia became a resident at the *Instituto de Cegos Padre Chico* (now known as the *Colégio Vincentino Padre Chico*) in the capital city of São Paulo which was staffed by the French Daughters of Charity of St. Vincent de Paul. Much beloved by the sisters who cared for her as well as the teachers who served as her instructors, Luzia thrived despite the challenges and difficulties posed by the circumstances of her early life. Blessed with an unwavering confidence in God and an amazing resiliency, Luzia made the most of her other four senses, as she devoted herself to discovering and making meaning of the world around her. Gifted with a creative imagination, Luzia's intuitions and perceptions provided her with a heightened sensitivity to everyone and everything that she encountered. Finding strength, hope and joy in the enduring memory of her Calabrese parents to whom she attributed her natural talent for music and poetry, Luzia always had a song in her heart and a poem for every occasion.

In the 1940s, the education of visually impaired students was conducted separately from other children and adolescents. Nevertheless, Luzia made the most of the educational opportunities made available to her. Intellectually astute and manually agile, Luzia dominated the Braille method which proved to be an important foundation for her own future achievements as well as an ability and skill which she generously shared as a means for empowering others. An enthusiastic, determined and compassionate advocate for self-reliance, independence and integration, Luzia knew from the "inside out" the importance of inclusion. Decades before national social policies were put in place, Luzia was determined in efforts to secure and defend the fundamental human rights of persons with special needs.

Experiencing the call to religious life in her youth and moved by the Holy Spirit to respond to this vocation, Luzia courageously and confidently approached the Vincentian sisters with whom she had shared her childhood and adolescence. Unfortunately, at the time, neither the Church nor the Congregation could imagine the

# Alleluia!



*Sister Luzia Aparecida Daniel*

admission of a person who was blind into religious life. However, God's designs for Luzia would not be thwarted, and God's providence prevailed. In the 1970s, she left São Paulo and her cherished childhood friend, Alaide, to follow the promptings of the Holy Spirit and set out for Goiás. Responding to the invitation of Jaime Camara, to assist in the development of a School for the Blind on the outskirts of the city of Goiânia, a few kilometers away from the Convento São Damiano, God's future plan for Luzia began to unfold. One day, she had occasion to meet Sr. Odelia and the rest of the story is history. Soon, after a time of exploration and discernment, Luzia requested to be received as a member of the Sisters of St. Francis of Mary Immaculate. Welcomed by the Congregation, Sister Luzia wholeheartedly gave herself over to keeping the promise she had made as a seven year old on the day of her First Communion: "Jesus, I want to belong only to you and to no one else." Living out her Franciscan vocation to be sister to everyone she encountered, Sr. Luzia was a hope-filled visionary who called forth from each us, her sisters, with whom she generously and interdependently shared her life, the confidence and courage to be all that we could be. Lovingly and humorously, she never missed an opportunity at our General Chapters to remind us that one does not need to be able to see in order to be a "woman of vision" like Mother Alfred.

A treasured teacher and mentor of those with special needs, an inspiring religious educator, a compassionate pastoral minister and an unforgettable conductor of "Aunt Lu's Little Band and Chorus," Sr. Luzia has left to countless children, women and men a legacy of love and service in the name of a loving God for whom nothing is impossible. As we entrust our dear Sister Luzia to the Lord whom she loved so much, we also celebrate the marvelous things that God has accomplished in her and through her. As Luzia now beholds the glory of the Lord for all eternity, we are reminded of the words of Helen Keller: "Death is no more than passing from one room to another. But there's a difference for me, you know. Because in that other room I shall be able to see."

Know that because of your journey with us, Luzia, we also have been given new eyes with which to see the Light of Christ that continues to shine in our memory of you. Alleluia, alleluia.

## *Sister Luzia Aparecida Daniel*

*January 1, 1934 — December 4, 2014*

*Born:* January 1, 1934  
*Parents:* Avelino Daniel and Marian (de Lima) Daniel  
*Postulancy:* February 8, 1980  
*Novitiate:* February 2, 1981  
*First Profession:* February 2, 1983  
*Final Profession:* February 1, 1986  
*Entered New Life:* December 4, 2014

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### **Ministry History**

1980 Director of School: School for the Blind, Goiânia  
1981 Pastoral Ministry, First Year Novice, Novitiate, Goiânia  
1982 Faculty, Second Year Novice: School for the Blind, San Damiano, Goiânia  
1983-1984 Faculty: School for the Blind  
1985-1989 Faculty, Catechist and Parish Ministry: School for the Blind, St. Joseph, Our Lady of Guadalupe  
1990 Pastoral Ministry: School for the Blind, Hidrolândia, Goiás  
1991-1992 Pastoral Ministry: Hidrolândia, Goiás  
1993-2001 Volunteer in School, Legion of Mary, Individual Catechetics: San Damiano, Goiânia  
2004 Teacher, Pastoral Ministry: Goiânia  
2005-2010 Music Teacher, Braille Instructor: Goiânia  
2011 Music Teacher, Braille Instructor: Instituto San Damiano e Paróquia, Goiânia  
2012-2014 Volunteer Teacher, Private Braille Lessons: Instituto San Damiano, Goiânia

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*Burial:* Thursday, December 4, 2014, Parque Memorial Cemetery, Goiânia  
*Seven Day Mass:* Wednesday, December 10, 2014  
*Predeceased by:* Her parents, Avelino Daniel and Marian (de Lima) Daniel  
*Survived by:* The Sisters of St. Francis in Brazil and in North America

*Rest in Peace, Sister Luzia*