

R.I.P.
Our dear Sr. Milagros (Rufina) Espiritu OSB
passed away



Benedictine convent Maria Frieden
born: July 19th 1924, profess.: September 08th 1946
deceased: July 10th 2020

Rufina, daughter of horologist Gaudencio Espiritu and his wife Silvestra Chrisotologo, was born on July 19th 1924 in Vigan (Philippines). There she attended secondary school. Later she entered the convent and received training for teaching religion and catechism.

Her dedication to God was inspired by her father, member of the Nocturnal Adorers, who never missed a Holy Mass. One night, she accompanied him and - for the first time - encountered Benedictine nuns of the Eucharistic King; they regularly came there from the isle Ilocos Sur. This special occurrence gave direction to young Rufina's path through life. Moreover the convent's beautiful church, its silence and peaceful tranquility left a deep impression on Rufina. Meeting the young, joyful sisters aroused her wish for a monastery life, serving God.

Shortly after her 18th birthday - in 1942 - she and one of her older friends joined the convent in Santa Maria, Ilocos Sur. At that time the Philippines were occupied by Japanese troops - it was difficult to provide the financial resources needed for entrance and habit. But Rufina's friends and her spiritual companion, Pater Miguel Dittler (S.V.D.), supported her.

Sr. Milagros described her novitiate and the time after her vows as a very hard chapter in her life. Misery, illness and scarcity of food everywhere. Just imagine the young sisters being sent to remote regions in order to help where they could - nursing all these sick, suffering people (even extracting aching teeth), witnessing infirmity.

But she also recalled our beloved and highly respected "Mother Foundress", M. Edeltraud, who always encouraged and reinforced her spiritual daughters. With foresight and an enormous trust in God she led them through those rough times.

Sr. Milagros' belief grew with her responsibilities. She taught children at public and Catholic schools, she was entrusted with important purchases for the convent and later on she was in charge of providing the required visa for sisters, who were sent to the re-established convent Maria Frieden in Kirchsulletten, Germany.

In 1975 she herself and five other sisters were called to our convent by abbess Gertrude von Calderon (Sr. Milagros was the only one of this group who stayed permanently).

After the settling-in period, when she got used to the new climate conditions, Sr. Milagros worked in the kitchen, helped making candles and took care of her sick sisters - like she always said in short: "I'll be wherever help is needed" ... She had a creative disposition and loved to design letter cards.

In 1996, for the first time within 21 years, she went away on a trip to the Philippines. In 2001 and 2006 she visited relatives in the USA. But, as she said, the convent Maria Frieden was her home. Here she spent 45 years - grateful that she could be with us. God had gifted Sr. Milagros with spirituality - filled with love, she enjoyed living in our community.

Prepared to go, longing for God, she left us the night before our Seraphic Father, St. Benedict's day of death. May our dear sister find fulfillment of all her wishes.

M. Mechthild Thürmer OSB and convent Maria Frieden
Kirchsulletten 30, 96199 Zapfendorf/Germany