

# In the Father's House

«As we have been united  
in the profession of the faith,  
so let us keep ourselves united  
in suffrage and intercession».  
(Fr. Alberione)



In the early hours of the morning of 29 May 2017, at the Vila Mariana community in São Paulo (Brazil), our brother priest has passed on to eternal life

## **FATHER ZULMIRO CAON**

**69 years, 56 of Pauline life, 49 of religious profession  
and 40 of priesthood**

It was perhaps a stroke that suddenly took Fr. Zulmiro's life a few hours before he got up to go to Mass in the chapel of the Vila Mariana community where he lived.

Zulmiro, son of Angelo and Teresa Calabria, was born in Nova Padua in the State of Rio Grande do Sul on 17 April 1948 and was baptized four days later in the local parish. He was only 13 years old when he entered in the Pauline community of Caxias do Sul (which has been closed in the meantime), where he attended his initial formation. He lived the experience of the novitiate in the "Cidade Paulina" in São Paulo, where he made his first religious profession on 11 February 1968, which confirmed forever on 1 May 1976. During those intense years of his formation, he manifested, as confirmed in the reports of his formators, a strong propensity for practical things, coupled with a deep desire for spiritual life. Those were years when his youthful exuberance exploded in a generosity of commitment in the apostolate but, sometimes, also with a tendency towards things that do not jibe with the community, but always animated by the desire that the group would work well. The young man, in fact, loved community life and was incapable of maintaining any grudge against anyone.

During the years of Zulmiro's formation, he first studied philosophy at the Redemptorists and then theology at the *Instituto Teológico São Paulo* (ITESP). On 12 December 1976, he was ordained priest in São Paulo by the imposition of the hands of Bishop Francisco Manuel Vieira, Bishop of Osasco.

After ordination, he held various services, including being the Director of Production at Caxias do Sul, where his apostolic role automatically implies witnessing the beauty of Pauline vocation in front of so many young people in formation. In 1987, he became Superior of that community, which he carried out with dedication for only two years, because in the Cidade Paulina in São Paulo, there came suddenly the need to take up the role of Director of the Press. He was in this delicate role for some 10 years of service, which proved to such an extent that it made him to ask, at the beginning of 1999, a year of absence from the community to devote himself to pastoral ministry in the Diocese of Rio Branco, where he put the result of his Pauline experience, presiding, among

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other things, the Mass over the radio and television aired by two local broadcasting stations. His homilies during that time were greatly appreciated by the faithful. A period, which was marked by a suffering that, in time, turned out to be fruitful, as he revealed: «I had my deepest experience of God at the time that I was there; in the midst of suffering I have seen the face of God».

The return to the Community was marked by a rapid reintegration to the Pauline life. There followed several responsibilities held over the years, including being the co-ordinator of the bookstores (Vila Mariana, 1999-2001) first, and that of being Delegate of the Rio de Janeiro Community (2001-2005) afterwards. Father Caon, in that *carioca* city, also made himself available for the radio apostolate. On 23 February 2005, he accepted, upon the request of Fr. Silvio Sassi, to transfer to Portugal as Regional Superior for two mandates, until 2011. Here, for lack of Pauline personnel, he was for some periods also the Bursar, Formation Master and General Coordinator of Formation. He returned to Brazil in 2011 when he was invited to offer his contribution in the marketing sector and to participate in book fairs, organizing events to promote *Paulus Editora* publications. Finally, from 2013 to 2015, he was Director of Diffusion.

The rich and varied apostolic life of Father Zulmiro shows all his eclecticism and entrepreneurship, also the result of the Venetian blood flowing in his veins. An energetic and generous man, he has always loved practical work, as demonstrated by the many furniture built with his own hands and left in the communities where he passed. His “gaucha” origin, however, was shown in his extraordinary ability to cook the *churrasco*, with which he has cheered many community evenings. Altruistic like a few, he has recently undergone a surgery that he seemed to have recovered well. Suddenly, however, it caught him in sleep, “our sister death”.

May Father Zulmiro, now that he has surrendered his soul to God and through the intercession of the Queen of Apostles, which we will celebrate with solemnity on Saturday, enjoy forever the fruits so much sown over the years.

Rome, 30 May 2017



Fr. Stefano Stimamiglio, ssp  
Secretary General

*The funeral will take place on Tuesday, 30 May 2017 at 13:00 (local time) at the parish of Santo Inácio de Loiola in São Paulo. The body will be buried immediately afterwards in the nearby Cemitério Santíssimo Sacramento.*

The circumscription Superiors should inform their communities about the prescribed suffrages (Cost. 65 and 65.1).