



## Obituary of our

**Sr. M. Margaretha Alacoque Galama**

**\* 14-05-1932 † 10-03-2024**

**Heilig Bloed, Aarle-Rixtel**

Sr. Margaretha was born on 14<sup>th</sup> May 1932 in Tjerkwerd, in the Province of Friesland in the Netherlands. Her parents, Dirk Galama and Margaretha, born Hettinga, had a small farm there, where the large family grew up. Still on the day of her birth, Anna Margaretha Agatha was baptised in St. Vitus Church in Blauwhuis. She later went to school in Blauwhuis

and attended the Lingerie-, Linen- and Costume-Sewing courses from 1946-1948, followed by the Agricultural Household School, from which she obtained her certificate in 1950.

On 5<sup>th</sup> August 1955, she entered the Missionary Sisters of the Precious Blood in Tienray. From Friesland to Limburg - quite a journey and a different language; no more Frisian, but Dutch. She was there with more young postulants from Friesland, but they had to speak strictly Dutch, not always easy for her.

On 21 August 1956, she was admitted to the novitiate, also in Tienray, and was given the religious name Sister Maria Margaretha Alacoque. Throughout her life, she abbreviated this name to Margaretha, which was her second baptismal name and her mother's name and which she was happy about.

She made her first profession on 22 August 1957 and her final profession on 22 August 1960, both in Tienray. Immediately after her first profession, she first went to school and graduated in Religion A in 1957, in 1960 she obtained her Mulo diploma (secondary general education) in Venlo and after her final profession, another year of further training followed in Horst. Immediately after her perpetual profession, she was transferred to the hospital in Horst, but despite her caring nature, nursing did not suit her. So she returned to Tienray in August 1961 and worked in housekeeping, especially in the sewing room.

After a missionary course in Soesterberg, she was sent to Bamanya, Congo, on 5<sup>th</sup> September 1966, where she worked mainly in the sewing room. Her calm and motherly nature made her popular and she was soon called "Mamangiti". In August 1968, she became superior in Bokuma, where she also looked after the sewing room. With a break for a French course in Brussels, during which, to her delight, she was also able to travel to the north of the Netherlands to visit her family, she remained in Bokuma until 1973 before being transferred back to Bamanya. Soon, however, in 1974, she was called to her seriously ill mother. Her father had died in 1957, before she made her first profession, and Sr. Margaretha has always

remained grateful that she was given the opportunity to assist her mother. After four months she returned to Bamanya.

In January 1980 she came to Boteka, where she managed to combine her work in the kitchen with social work. She became a regional assistant in September 1984. She remained in the Congo until May 2000, alternating between Boteka and Bamanya, each time in charge of the kitchen. This period was interrupted twice due to serious political threats, which forced the sisters to return temporarily to Europe under adventurous circumstances: from September to December 1991 and from March to August 1997. Each time, Sister Margaretha returned to the Congo as soon as the situation had calmed down somewhat.

When she returned to Tienray in May 2000 - as she thought for good - she worked at reception and in housekeeping. She had already settled in at Tienray and took part in the retreat in autumn 2002 ... It was during this retreat that she received a phone call. From Rome! Could she please go to the Congo for another year ... The sisters in the Democratic Republic of Congo were full of goodwill and had a lot of energy, but lacked the element of the older sisters. "Sister Margaretha, I know you're on retreat. You don't have to decide right away. Just talk it over with Our Lord and then give me the answer at the end of the retreat," she heard. After only a very short silence, she calmly and simply said: "I don't need to think about it. I can go". And so she went, the full year 2003, to Kinshasha, working there in the kitchen and doing the housekeeping with her calm and kind nature and her big heart.

When she returned to the Netherlands shortly before Christmas 2003, the sisters had already moved from the missionary convent of St Joseph in Tienray to the missionary convent of Heilig Bloed in Aarle-Rixtel. She soon found her place there, first in the refectory, later in the sewing room, friendly, quiet, helpful and hospitable.

In recent times, getting up became more difficult, walking too, her memory was weakening, she became short of breath, got help where necessary, but it kept going on.

How much she enjoyed family visits, games with fellow sisters, people around her. That's what she said and that's what she showed.

And so was her last day, Sunday 10 March 2024: in the morning she walked with her walker to the chapel for the celebration of the Eucharist, a pleasant day, cheerfulness over coffee in the afternoon. She noticed a new face among the sisters, so she greeted her joyfully three times. A beautiful day.

She came twice more in the evening to wish the sisters goodnight in the living room.

And then, unexpectedly and quietly, she went to the Lord.

"Are you calling me? I don't have to think about it, I can go."

***Mamangiti, Sr. Margaretha, Aunt Anna for the Family, thank you very much.***

***Rest in peace. Oant sjen.***