



The gestures of charity and tenderness towards children are countless in Mother Clara's life.

One day she arrived in Braga, in the community of St. Mark's Hospital. Her programmes included a visit to the sick, for she was interested in everyone. She wishes to know how they were treated, and the condition of each one. She was pained by their illness and, if possible, tried to remedy what did not go well.

During this visit, they came to tell her something incredible. There was a cart man on the road with a little child that was not his. He found it abandoned in a dustbin.

The heart of Mother Clara shivered. Sensitive as she was, she guessed that the child was not in good hands. She felt the mean attitude and selfishness that the fragile and defenseless child had to face. In an impulse of protection, she sent for the child from the carriage.

No, It is mine! she answered. She retorted that, if they wanted her, they would have to pay a good sum.

This behavior was alarming. It was urgent and necessary to get that innocent child out of those avaricious hands. Mother Clara did not hesitate. At that price, the fragile creature was rescued.

On making inquiries, nothing is discovered about the child's origin. For this reason, at her baptism, she receives the name of Maria Clara. She grew up protected and educated by the Sisters of Braga, and at the age of schooling she entered the boarding school of Trinas, among the girls of Mother Clara.

LITTLE FLOWERS FOR THE MONTH OF FEBRUARY

First Little Flower

Mother Maria Clara
Of the Child Jesus

**Life is precious
gift of God.
He has created us
in His own image
and likeness.
Therefore life is to
be respected, loved,
appreciated
and cared for.**

**This little flower
comes to remind us
of the preciousness
of life which
is a gift of
God.**

LITTLE FLOWERS FOR THE MONTH OF FEBRUARY

Second Little Flower

**Sr. Elize Conception
Velloz (Sr. Mary Alice
of the Infant Jesus)**

Sr. Elize C. Velloz, was born in Goa, India, and educated in Bombay, at Mount Mary Convent, Bandra, where she came in touch with the Franciscan Hospitaller Sisters, and responded to God's loving call to follow him as His Spouse; a vocation which she lived faithfully, with dedication and commitment. Her strong intimate relationship with her spouse, the good Lord bloomed into a beautiful flower spreading its fragrance and attracting others to God. Her smile was contagious. It brought a glow to her face, reflecting God's presence in a simple affectionate soul.

Sr. Elize was blessed with talents which served as the rock and fortitude of her mission. She fulfilled her mission in various capacities as a Teacher, School Principal, Superior, Novice Mistress, Provincial Councillor, and Provincial Superior. Whatever positions she held she was always humble, simple and available; reaching out to assist others with great love and affection.

The Sisters of the Province, who loved her as their Provincial and novices who cherished her as their Novice Mistress, have only good and enduring memories of a friend, counsellor, guide and mentor. She always displayed good humour, and was sincerely concerned about the welfare of others. With her intelligence and a spirit of faith, she continued to be a presence of goodness, without discrimination. Her kindness, gentleness and above all her radiating smile attracted people to her and thus she was able to share her life with them.

With fortitude and strength which flowed from her intimacy with the Lord she faced the debilitating illness in her final years as Provincial Superior.

In the last days of her life, in the Intensive Care, her smiling countenance was a gift to all those around her in hospital, an example of a gracious life. She always greeted the doctors with a cheerful and silent smile. All of them, in turn, called her "Smiling Sister" and other endearing names. Her case was a mystery to all - she was often at death's door - with no sign of hope and she was back to life again with her sweet and gentle smile. The doctors admitted that this was solely due to the supernatural power of prayers! Indeed, there is no tragedy on earth that cannot fulfil the purposes of heaven, in the eyes of God and by His grace, never rendered in vain.

She returned to her Heavenly Father on 10th October 1985 while in office as Provincial Superior. Crowds of people, students, teachers, parents and well-wishers flocked to pay their last tribute to their "Smiling Sister" who was a source of encouragement and joy to them.

