

IN MEMORIAN MARGITA VRABELOVA

Serving the Nation with a Mother's Heart



On August 19, 2016 our members in Slovakia faced the sad duty to say farewell to our beloved sister Margita Vrabelova who died on Sunday (August 14) at the age of 85. She was known also to foreign members who came to workshops in Dunajska Luzna near Bratislava. Margita served as the church leader for more than twelve years, starting in 1974; she had been our church leader and a mother for members in Czechoslovakia during the time of persecution. For 44 years she supported with unwavering faith our True Parents' mission and made remarkable offerings. Her passing away marks the closing of an important chapter of our early church history.

Margita passed away on Sunday afternoon in the hospital where she had been brought after feeling intense pain in her head. The first part of the Seongwha was held at the Bratislava Crematory due to the wish of her physical family. The first part of the ceremony was done according to our tradition with members attending, the second part was done in traditional style for relatives and other friends who came to say farewell to her. In the afternoon our members gathered in the National Seminary Center where she had lived and worked so long, and held a wonderful celebration, sharing pictures and their experiences with Margita. She enjoyed the visits of the second generation from Slovakia as well as from all over Europe; she was a talented cook and all guests, young and old, will never forget her unmatched cakes and homemade food. Margita who received an award by True Mother in 2015, attended all great church events as much as her ability to walk and talk allowed it. Though she had a small pension she paid the cost of travel for other members to meet True Parents overseas.

Margita lived in the National Seminary Center house outside of Bratislava where numerous workshops took place in the new millennium. She had lived on the property since the 1980ies taking care of the original owner, an elderly lady who bequeathed the property to her. From the very beginning Margita envisioned to establish a church center there in the future. She donated the house to the church, and in the second half of the 1990ies extensive reconstruction started.

Margita Vrabelova was born on June 10, 1931 in Bratislava. Her mother Katharina belonged to the German minority and the Lutheran Church, for that reason Margita spoke German fluently. Her father Mikulas was Slovak and Catholic, and worked as a gardener. Her eldest son Vladimír was introduced to the Principle first, he witnessed his mother and younger brother Milos, who became a member too. More and more people came to visit her home and made it the new "center".



Margita played a crucial role before and after the communist authorities persecuted our members. Then the German missionary Brunhilde occasionally came to Bratislava to bring news about the providence and True Parents. She smuggled across the border small papers with speeches and articles, sometimes also handwritten excerpts of the Divine Principle. They fixed together the single pages at Margita's workplace which had the equipment of a graphic studio. When the police came to Margita's house to arrest her elder son, she was alarmed because lots of church materials was stored there. Luckily the police did not search the house. Before his arrest Vladimír still was able to save the suitcase which was heavy with church literature. During the next years, the suitcase was transferred from one place to the other, sometimes it was buried in a garden. Vladimír was sentenced to spend three years in prison; Margita was not imprisoned because she had three children dependent on her.

When the interrogations and the court trials started, Margita observed the desperate struggle of our members to keep things secret. The police forged false testimonies to provoke them to tell things they did not want to say willingly. During the court trial in 1974, Margita observed the attitudes of the accused members in court. Only a few tried to twist facts for their benefit, most showed courage and took the accusations on themselves. During that challenging period Margita fasted very often, one time she did a 21-day fast and several times she made a 7-day fast to support the imprisoned members. The Holy Ground in Horsky Park was established before Margita had joined the church; but she knew about the special place at the huge chestnut tree. Because she lived nearby, she started to go there for prayer while our members were in prison. The members who were not imprisoned or had been released also went there to pray, individually, never as a group, mainly in the early morning or nightly hours. There were rumors that the secret police were observing the Holy Ground.

Someday Brunhilde visited Margita's house to deliver some information. As usual, her visit had not been announced beforehand. They had no chance to make a phone call since the secret police controlled every incoming call. When she saw Brunhilde standing at the gate, she got terrified.

Hastily she went outside and pulled the German sister inside, deeply afraid that her neighbors would observe the foreigner and report to the police. She realized that Brunhilde was in grave danger and that she had to leave the country at a different border crossing as the one she had entered. Margita quickly bought a train ticket to send her back a different way.

Some members who were not sent to prison, stayed in contact with Margita but avoided to visit her house. To find a new meeting place they bought a garden with a cottage on the outskirts of the Czech town of Brno. The garden was huge and had two entrances which was an advantage because the neighbors had almost no chance to observe all arriving persons. In this garden also meetings with rare visitors from abroad took place, the most important were the Holy Wine ceremony in 1981 and the 6,000 Couples Blessing in 1982. To conduct the Holy Wine Ceremony Rev. Peter Koch came to Brno; Margita picked him up with her car at the train station and drove him to the garden. They had to take care that the secret police did not follow them.

Later on, members met in a garden with a cottage which belonged to Margita's parents. The place served as a secret meeting point for some period. Unfortunately, there was a road passing nearby and many people watched the meetings, so they again stopped going there. Margita had rescued all church literature materials and stored them in a large box in her parental cottage.

There are many more achievements of which Margita may be proud of and makes her unforgettable. Since she loved gardening so much we wish that our Heavenly Parent awards her with the most beautiful flower garden.

