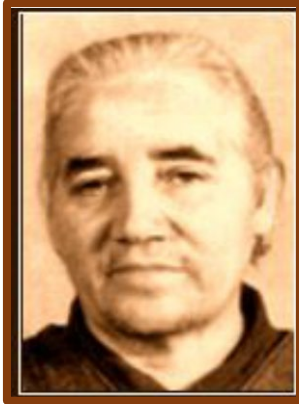


Barbora Boenigh (Sr. Florina)
(Poland/Slovakia) 1894-1956, Martyr
Daughter of Charity of St. Vincent de Paul
Served the sick and poor all her life.
Nurse at the hospital in Nitra.
Arrested and tortured in prison.



Barbora Boenigh was born December 21, 1894, in Wegajty (aka Wengaithen), Jonkowo, Olsztyn, Poland. She joined the Society of Daughters of Charity of St. Vincent de Paul on June 27, 1914, at age 17. She served the poor sick all her life. She cared for the children in the Trnava orphanage for 10 years. She was the superior of the hospital communities in Kremnica, Ruzomberok & Levoca.

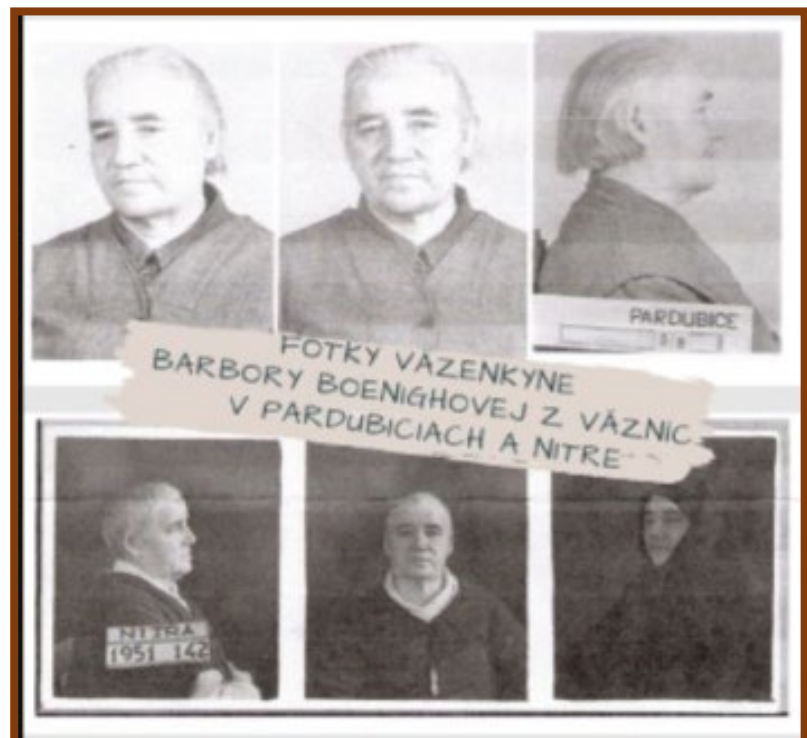
Of Sister Florina, the other sisters would say, “*When I say she was good, that’s not enough, she was pre-eminent! Pious, modest, unobtrusive, hardworking. She did the lowest work. In Levoca, she was in charge of supplying the hospital kitchen. She raised pigs and poultry for the hospital, and grew flowers for the chapel. Sometimes she surprised her sister on night duty and brought her some sweets. She took great care to ensure that the sisters were faithful in their vocation and ministry.*”

In 1948, she worked as a nurse at the hospital in Nitra. She was arrested at the hospital by communist “State Security Service” on November 22, 1951, at age 57, for: 1) sheltering Fr. Stefan Kristin CM who escaped from concentration monastery in Hronsky Benadik and 2) helping Lazarist theologians continue their seminary studies, locating private homes, provided food, clothes, and finances.

Sister Florina was beaten and exposed to hunger and cold. She would not betray the location of the sheltered Lazarists. At the time, she was already weakened by the chronic illnesses of diabetes and heart disease. The authorities transferred her from Nitra to Bratislava on 19 March 1952.

After 10 months in pre-trial confinement, which included beatings, she was sentenced to *15 years in prison, fine of 20,000 crowns, forfeiture of property and loss of honorary civil rights for 10 years for the crime of high treason.*

She was imprisoned with sister Vincencia Hanskova, first in Rimavska Sobota in Pardubice,



where they met other imprisoned sisters. She was assigned to the knitting factory. Her health continued to deteriorate. She was then transferred to prison no. 2, then to Pankrac prison in Prague. Sister Florina died on January 31, 1956, 8:30 pm, from a recurrent myocardial infarction.

The nurses learned of her death gradually, and it was confirmed when a package was returned marked “DIE”. Her body was dumped in the prison yard until the mortuary service arrived the following day. Snow covered the corpse.

The Sisters found her grave in Prague-Dablice and provided a marker. A lilac grew above the place where it was located. When her prison file was opened, they found that it contained a picture of a child looking at the cross and the Miraculous Medal, which she had distributed throughout her life.

*“Sisters, just pray.
Prayer will save the whole world, including us!”*

“I sacrifice it all for you, that you may be faithful and steadfast.”

References:

- 1) Hagiography Circle. Slovakia-Sister Florina (Barbora Boenighova). Accessed 15 May 2022. http://newsaints.faithweb.com/new_martyrs/Slovakia2.htm
- 2) Society of Daughters of Christian Love St. Vincenta de Paul. S. Florina Boenigh. Accessed 15 May 2022. <https://www.vincentky.sk/100-rokov-slovenskej-provincie/medailony-o-vynimocnych-sestrach/s-florina-boenighova/>. (Source of Photo)

Note: This biography is for all desiring to grow in holiness and follow His Holiness Pope Pius XI address to 2000 nurses assembled at Castel Gondolfo on August 27, 1935 for the II World Congress of Catholic Nurses (www.ciciams.org / www.nacn-usa.org): *to first and foremost bring the Christian supernatural, Christ to our patients, bring salvation to souls*. May it also help nursing students with your Nursing History course. Source: Diana L. Ruzicka (2022). *The Book of Nurse Saints*. Available at www.lulu.com/spotlight/Ruzicka