

FATHER ANTÔNIO BICHO FILHO, CSS



Photo taken: June 12, 2003

BORN:

Casa Branca, SP, Brazil – June 27, 1932

PERPETUAL VOWS:

February 16, 1957

PRIESTLY ORDINATION:

Casa Branca – December 8, 1960

DIED:

Uberaba, MG, Brazil – 13.04.2005

AGE:

72

PROVINCE:

St. Joseph, Brazil

He was just a skinny little boy, who used to wander on the streets of the city of Casa Branca, in São Paulo State, in Brazil, where he was born on June 27, 1932. His father, Antônio Bicho, and his mother, Adelaide Paschoalinotto Bicho, gave him the name of Antônio Bicho Filho on his Baptism and guided him along the path of the Christian principles. Just after his 12th birthday, he felt a special call from the Lord, to which he responded and entered the Holy Cross Apostolic School (*Escola Apostólica Santa Cruz*) in Rio Claro, São Paulo State, on February 27, 1945, with the intention to become a priest. The School was directed by the Stigmatine Priests, and there he began the medium school, attending classes there. In 1950 he went to Ribeirão Preto, São Paulo State, and at the Blessed Gaspar Bertoni Institute (*Instituto Venerável Gaspar Bertoni*) he began his high school classes there. A little later he became ill and had to return to his family home. After some time he recovered and returned to the Institute in Ribeirão Preto, to the surprise of his fellow students and even of his Superiors. From February, 1953 to February, 1954 he did his Novitiate in Ribeirão Preto, and on February 16, 1954, he pronounced his first religious vows in the Congregation of the Sacred Stigmata. In the same Institute he studied Philosophy and Theology, and on December 8, 1960 he was ordained Priest in Casa Branca, SP.

During his life as a priest of almost 45 years he exerted his ministry in our houses in the states of São Paulo, Minas Gerais, Goiás and the Federal District (*Distrito Federal*).

When he was in Goiânia, with Fr. José Bazzon, assisting at the Church of St. Sebastian (*Igreja de São Sebastião*) in Jardim América, he became quite ill with a serious case of pneumonia. He underwent special treatment in Campos do Jordão, SP, and after some time he got well and returned to his ministry. With his 5 feet 10 inch

frame, as an erect silhouette, thin shape, this gave him an ascetic-hermit appearance. He came across as always joyful and smiling; his voice was powerful and well thrown, which helped him to make his preaching very appreciated.

He was active, dedicated and zealous in his ministerial efforts, showing a kind way and great ease in treating with young people, captivating them, and for them, he always nurtured a genuine affection and respect. He gained much sympathy with his vibrant and joyful spirit, which was communicated with his a smiling, mischievous and happy face.

He was always maintained a certain dignity and was indeed an exemplary Priest, very much appreciated by his parishioners everywhere he worked. As a religious, he was always committed to carrying out his duties in the Stigmatine Congregation, which he dearly loved and tried to promote.

Everywhere he exercised his Priestly activities and lived as a Stigmatine Religious, he established strong friendships, good relationships and always left a good impression and would often be much-missed.

Some time ago he developed gastric problems with chronic encephalitis, that disturbed him in his ministerial activities.

Lately, however, when he was already living in Uberaba, MG, in the Stigmatine Community of Our Lady of Abbey (*Comunidade Estigmatina de Nossa Senhora da Abadia*), he began to experience further health problems and had to be interned in a hospital in a serious condition. He underwent prostate surgery and from which he recovered and returned to home. However, a few days later, after some further medical examinations, a malign tumor was detected in his stomach. After a long, delicate and serious surgery, he was brought to the Intensive Care Unit, where he seemed to responding well. However, he suffered a lung embolism, which was brought under control, when he further developed a hospital infection. He received the Sacrament of the Sick, but his constitution continued to weaken. On the morning of April 13, 2005, he gave his soul up to the Creator, at the age of a little more than 72. Even with so many people praying, God thought it better to bring him to Himself.

During his illnesses in recent months, he faced all his suffering with much trust in God, with no complaint; on the contrary, he even used to laugh of his situation.

His body was waked at the Our Lady of Abbey Church (*Igreja Nossa Senhora da Abadia*), in Uberaba, where his Funeral Mass was celebrated on April 13, at 7 pm. The Mass was presided by the Most Rev. Antônio Alberto G. Rezende, CSS and concelebrated by the Most Rev. José Alberto Moura, CSS and the Superior Provincial of the Province of the Holy Cross, Fr. Valmir Cassim da Silva with about 15 other Priests, and also assisted by Fr. Bicho's relatives and a large number of the faithful.

His body was then taken to Morrinhos-GO, where there was celebrated another funeral Mass, on April 14, at 9 am, at the St. Sebastian Church (*Igreja de São Sebastião*). The Mass was presided by the Most Rev. Antônio Fernando Brochini, CSS and concelebrated by the Superior Provincial of the Province of St. Joseph, Fr. Rubens Sodré Miranda and by about other 15 Priests, and also assisted by a large number of faithful people.

Then his body was taken to the local cemetery and buried in the tomb of the Stigmatines, where it rests in peace, waiting the glory of the final resurrection.

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