

11/16/95

Name..... POSADA, MARIA MERCEDES
Birth February 21, 1923-San Cristobal, Col.
Parents Joaquin Posada & Maria del Rosario Velez
Nationality Colombian/American 5/8/1986
Next of Kin Maria Celina Posada (Niece) Horacio Posada (brother)
 Apartado 56-75 Carrera 35A #36-17
Baptism Medellin, Colombia, S.A. Barrio El Salvador Medellin, Coll. S.A.
 February 21, 1923
Confirmation
Entrance March 15, 1944-Medellin, Colombia
Prise d'Habit H. May 10, 1945-Bogota, Colombia
First Vows..... May 10, 1947-Bogota
Profession..... January 9, 1954-Havana, Cuba
Studies 8th grade Speaks and reads English and Spanish

Death November 16, 1995-LaBella, Florida (72 yrs. 8 mos.)
 BURIAL; Ft. Denaud Cemetery LaBelle, Florida

YEAR	PLACE	EMPLOYMENT	SUPERIOR
1948-1954	Vista Alegre Santaigo de Cuba	Household	
1954-1961	Santurce P.R.	Household	
1961-1971	Stone R. Wash. D.C.	Household	
1971-1976	Kenwood	Household	
1976-1981	Boston Shawmut	Parish Aide - Work with the poor	
1981-1995	LaBelle, FL Our Lady Queen of Heaven Parish	Pastoral Ministry Work with migrants. Charged with Parish Hall and clothing and food distribution. Kindergarten CCD	
Killed in auto accident November 16, 1995 with Sr. Rosa Orjuela - Woman and child were taken to hospital.			

1. Nom:	Posada	Prénom:	Mercedes
2. Naissance:	Feb. 21, 1923	Date	Lieu
3. Prem. Voeux:	May 1947		Bogota
4. Profession:	Jan. 9, 1954		Cuba

5. Nom du Père: Juaquin Posada
 6. Nom de la Mère: Rosario Velez
 7. Domicile des parents (s'ils sont en vie: pays, ville):

8. Nationalité: *Colombienne*
 9. Langue maternelle: *Espagnol*
 10. Autres langues qu'on peut lire et parler:
 11. Etudes - primaires, secondaires, universitaires (souligner ce qui convient.)

(Si l'on a fait des études primaires seulement, souligner "primaires"; si l'on a fait des études primaires et secondaires, souligner "secondaires"; si l'on a fait des études universitaires, souligner "universitaires" et indiquer aussi l'université et le groupe de sujets étudié' exemple: Cambridge - Sciences; Oxford - Lettres; Louvain - Théologie).

12. Profession exercée avant l'entrée en religion, s'il y a lieu:
 13. Formation d'enseignante (non universitaire):

14. Emplois exercés le plus souvent:
 15. Aptitudes particulières:

(N.B. pour les rubriques No. 14 et 15. - Lorsqu'il s'agira de la feuille remplie aux Premiers Voeux, ces deux rubriques pourront être remplies, ou non, selon les cas.)

SISTER MARIA DE LAS MERCEDES POSADA

Sister 'Mercy' was born at San Cristobal, Colombia on February 21, 1923, of Joaquin and Rosario Posada, one of triplets. Her mother, as well as one infant died in childbirth so the two little ones were raised in an orphanage. Both the twin Rosario and Mercedes entered religious life. Mercedes entered the Society of the Sacred Heart in Bogota, Colombia in March, 1944, made her professed habit in May, 1945 and First Vows in May, 1947. At that time she was sent to Santiago de Cuba and remained there until July 1953. Her Final Profession was made at Marianao, Havana de Cuba, January 9, 1954. When the Castro government took over our houses she remained in Santurce, Puerto Rico until 1961, at which time Reverend Mother Barry accepted her at Stone Ridge, Washington, D.C., to help in the community and in the school. From 1971 until 1976 she was in Albany, New York; from 1976 -1981 in Boston, Massachusetts.

By that time the little mission in LaBelle, Florida was growing and Our Lady Queen of Heaven Parish served many migrants working in the citrus groves of Hendry County, and Sister Velez and Sister Orjuela asked for her help with the Food Pantry and clothes for the poor. The care of the Parish Hall and snacks for the religion classes came first with Mercy, but loved to visit the migrant camps whenever Sister Rosa went there for classes and visitation. In 1980 she had the joy of joining the Spanish recyclage in Palma de Majorca, then returning to visit her friend in Madrid after becoming a naturalized citizen of the United States. She particularly loved her regular visits to Colombia to see her family, and share with them the precious gifts they so much appreciated.

How the Convent grounds flourished under her green thumb, for she could stick a branch of crepe myrtle in the ground and it would blossom. Gardening, crocheting afghans by the dozens, cooking for the community: "Volunteering my time is a joy to me, and it makes me so thankful to God for all He has done for us." A side of her that very few of the Society realized was her ability to grasp a difficult situation better than others, a depth of understanding that some parishioners saw as a God-inspired gift of the "mighty mite." Her tireless dedication to one of our neighbors on oxygen was a beautiful example of what the community motto, "meeting the needs of the present moment with compassion" meant to her generous heart. But it was to all who came for food or help that she gave of herself as well, and relished the opportunity to give whatever she had. There will never be another 'Mercy'--now the community is trying to replace her in the countless chores that only she remembered to do. In her own words she stated: " I put myself in God's hands each day and ask that all be done for His glory."

On that last fateful morning of November 16th, Mercy was aware that Rosa's companion that day was to have been Sister Velez, who was unable to go. God wanted these two valiant travelers to journey together for the migrants one more time, and so they died during their regular work of love. Within an hour the news had spread through the town of the accident; within another hour LaBelle began to appear at the Convent in grief and shock. Immediately word went out to the Society, and our "community of two" felt the warmth and concern of the Provincial, the province, the Mother House, and our houses throughout the world.

The Funeral Mass celebrated at the LaBelle Civic Center brought Bishop John Nevins of the Venice Diocese and thirty-three priests who had known and respected the sisters for their work with the Hispanic Community. They even rode in the fleet of buses to the cemetery, as our migrants go to work in the citrus groves each day. Everyone stayed until the last shovelfull of sand was placed over the coffins and flowers covered the graves. But most fitting of all testimonies of admiration and honor will be the headstone explaining the work of the Society, and polished granite ledgers covering each grave, so that "future generations of migrants will be educated, and know the veneration and esteem with which all of LaBelle held these wonderful workers for the Lord."