

A Tribute to Bogumila (Bonnie) Szulc



I have had the honour, privilege and pleasure of knowing Bonnie Szulc for 27 years. There is one strong thread that has been interwoven throughout the tapestry of our friendship. It is that of Blessed Pope John Paul II.

We met in 1984, bl. John Paul II's first visit as Pope to Edmonton. My parents and I were invited to Bonnie's house through my aunt. The Papa Mobile was driving down her street and we all went outside and sang a church hymn entitled, *My chcemy Boga (We Desire Thee-Our Lord, Our God)*. Our beloved Pope waved to us as he drove by. From that point on my friendship with Bonnie grew.

Shortly after, I joined the Board of Directors of the Friends of the Catholic University of Lublin (where John Paul II taught for 25 years). Bonnie presided as president of the present Friends of John Paul II Catholic University of Lublin for the past twenty years.

Ten years later we were brought together professionally at the John Paul II Polish-Bilingual Program at St. Basil Catholic School. A decade passed again and found us both fortunate to have a private audience with John Paul II.

Bonnie constituted the Polish- Bilingual Program at St. Basil School. When one would think of our program, along with its founder Maria Sava, one would think of Bonnie Szulc. She was devoted to the program and its students. She instilled in her students patriotism for her and their beloved homeland- its rich history, culture, traditions as well as moral and Catholic values. The countless hours she had prepared students for poetry/literary contests, celebrations, various occasions in and out of school be it the Polish Hall, City Hall, Festival of Trees, Mother Language Day through IHLA and the Polish Radio. She truly was an inspiration to her fellow colleagues.

Bonnie was a private person. She kept her illness (to a great extent) to herself- something that we must respect and understand. Her faith was immensely strong. If you ever wanted to meet with her on a Saturday night, you could easily find her reading during the Saturday Mass at the Holy Rosary Parish. I truly believe that her unshakeable faith and the guidance of Blessed John Paul II helped her during her final days with us. May we focus on this and the legacy that she has left behind.

Dearest Bonnie:

You will be truly missed by all. We will miss your warm smile, your presence in our classrooms, hallways, staffroom and during our celebrations. Farewell esteemed colleague, very dear and cherished friend. God be with you. May you rest in peace.

Droga Bogusiu, Kochana Przyjaciolko:

Zawsze bedziesz czescia naszej wspolnoty szkolnej, czlonkinia naszej rodziny. Bedzie nam brakowalo Ciebie w naszych klasach, w pokoju nauczycielskim oraz na roznych uroczystosciach. Pozostaniesz na zawsze w naszych sercach. Niech Ci ziemia bedzie lekka. Zegnaj kolezanko. Spoczywaj z Bogiem.

Written by:

Greta Derus