

# AÍDA CURI

July 14, 1958



**PURE GOLD**  
**IN A MINE OF DARKNESS**

Written by her brother,  
Mons. Maurício Curi.

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The original title: *Aída Curi – Ouro Puro em Mina de Trevas.*

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PURE GOLD IN A MINE OF DARKNESS

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Aída Curi

## INTRODUCTION

Talking or writing about Aída Curi's life requires, from any true and honest narrator, a number of virtues, because it is necessary to face the great contradiction between purity and violence.

The first, just like love, has been suffering in the course of the last decades not only a blatant dilapidation and misconception as to its true concept, but as a false conception of its agents, often considered unusual, unique, eccentric or even unstable beings. It is undoubtedly an interpretation of the consumerist and hedonistic world marked by selfishness and individualism in which we live in and delimits man according to thoroughly materialistic criteria.

Violence, on the other hand, has sadly been the characteristic that has marked behaviors and relationships, creating an ill, frightened, insecure society, often without any perspectives. Not only in Brazil but in a worldwide scenario, authorities and governments are concerned about the increase in violent crimes, where the spiral is ascending rapidly and the most dazzling solutions are being presented to society. Solutions that start from the introduction of tougher sanctions and pass through the revision of the educational system up until the development of new leisure facilities for teenagers living in the outskirts, with the hopeful purpose of preventing delinquency.

However, few and persevering heroes dare to spread the ideals which really build a just and caring society. It is not enough that the Federal Constitution proclaims these ideals through all the letters of the alphabet and call its citizens to practice what are considered to be the utmost virtues - justice and solidarity.

It is necessary that the human being, which means each and every person, be convinced that the impact on society, which is wishfully to be fair, understanding, respectful and truly dignified, depends solely on their own fair, understanding, respectful and truly dignified behavior.

Aída Curi and the characters of this book “*Ouro Puro em Mina de Trevas*” (Pure Gold in a Mine of Darkness), now in its 5th edition, launch to the reader of this new century a immense challenge - the choice to either live by trailing the path of virtues or accede to the proposal of violence... violence that includes visible symptoms of corruption at all levels and that painfully permeates the following pages with details of Aída’s cruel death and, due to its nature, has also considerably augmented and unfortunately disfigured the public authorities.

After having read these genuine documents that illustrate the present literary work, it is up to you the reader, each and every one of you, to make your own personal choice as to the society you wish to be part of and the best behavior that will form such society in your daily lives.

**Munir Cury, retired State Attorney  
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## THE AÍDA CURI CASE.



On July 14, 1958, one of the most terrifying crimes became part of Brazil's history. It was around 9 p.m. in Copacabana, in the city of Rio de Janeiro, a body plunged from a 12-story building and lay motionless on the sidewalk of Atlântica Avenue. The number of the building was 3388. Aída Curi (some printed media wrote her name Aída Cury), the name of a young girl at the age of 18, who would become known throughout Brazil and even in other countries. Her parents, Gattás Assad Curi and Jamila Jacob Curi, were both natives from the city of Saidnaya, Syria, and were part of the Melkite Catholic Church. Aída had four brothers: Nelson, Roberto, Maurício (the author of this literary work) and Waldir. All of them are still alive today. When they were young, Mrs. Jamila became a widow. When she left Belo Horizonte, where Aída was born (436 Santos Dumont Avenue), she went to Rio de Janeiro and was received by two very gentle ladies called Alice and Flora dos Santos Moreira. She stayed in their school called "Escola Moreira" for many years. It was located at the district of Riachuelo, in the northern part of the city of Rio. As for Aída, she received refined education in a Spanish school that was run by nuns and connected to the "Filhas de São José" ("Saint Joseph's daughters") congregation, called "Educandário Gonçalves de

Araújo” (“Gonçalves de Araújo Educational Establishment”), which in turn belonged to the “Irmandade do Santíssimo Sacramento da Igreja da Candelária” (Brotherhood of the Blessed Sacrament of Candelária). She was always the first in everything. When she left the “Educandário”, after having completed her eighteenth birthday, she was preparing for a civil service examination that would decide her future. Studying hard in Copacabana, she could have never imagined she would fall into the hands of a young group that had their meeting point at Miguel Lemos street in that neighborhood and be a victim of a horrifying rape, a criminal act in which she was lured into with blandishments and then forcibly mobilized to be submitted to this group’s sleazy acts. It was difficult to find all the culprits because they were protected by influential and powerful people. The Criminal Proceeding, with its irregular and disreputable vicissitudes, was closely followed by many Brazilian families, North and South of Brazil. Until today, much still remains to be unveiled.

There were and still are countless people who want to know what really happened on that pernicious day and, who was this angel called Aída Curi. This fact was and continues to be emblematic for the past half-century in regard to the social life of our country. Many journalists, in articles or stories that were published either in magazines or newspapers, interpreted, to their own convenience, the criminal fact without ever as much consulting our family to know the truth. They even acted against our family’s will, misrepresenting facts with inaccurate and false information and, sometimes, unwillingly, tarnishing Aída’s honor. And what was even worse was that, when our family demanded explanations, they did not recant. Even a major TV station, during a prime time program had the audacity to show a movie portraying the crime without taking the family’s protest into consideration. They totally ignored a Judicial Notification issued right before the program was aired. They also distorted the facts by imagining her, just moments before, going with one of the offenders to another building. The author of the movie implied that, after such happening, she went up to the top of the “Rio Nobre” building because she actually wanted to be there. It also showed her standing on the terrace totally naïve and dazzled in front of the Copacabana beach, and the only moment she actually had any type of reaction was when the assassins attempted to sexually assault her. It even exhibited the intervention of a second person to save her from the first. If there had actually been the intervention of a second perpetrator to save her from the first (as it normally occurs in the “rape technique” and



shown in this movie), wouldn't Aída fall into the arms of this second person, pleading for help according to the interpretation of the movie (!?). Pure despicable and malicious imagination of the misinformed artists! After so much violence and betrayal, Aída had in mind only one thing and one thing alone: to carry out the promise she had made to our mother three days before: "I can die, but no one will ever lay a single finger on me".

However, they preferred to believe in both the suspected version of the murderers and the word-of-mouth communication: "I heard it in the grapevine"... rather than the intimate persuasion of the family in relation to the crime as well as all the uncontested evidences presented in the Judicial Records. I will try, therefore, to summarize in a handful of lines the criminal facts, exposing the true conviction of our family, based on Judicial Records we had in hands and on the information obtained either personally or through relatives, friends, acquaintances or people that were interviewed, thus revealing some unknown facts about the crime.

Years ago, when the legal prescription of 20 years had not yet expired, I tried to reexamine the entire case. However, not being able to rely on the testimony of the people interviewed by me, I was obliged to abandon it. The main testimony revealed to me, in our lawyer's office, details that could dilute doubts, identify new culprits and ultimately, it could have solved the crime. When we requested this person to appear in Court, she refused determinately, for unknown and unexplained reasons. She should have been questioned in the criminal complaint lawsuit to which, on the other hand, I had to answer for but later on, I was acquitted. This lawsuit was filed against me by initiative of one of the witnesses that was accused by me and who was publicly questioned.



## THE CRIMINAL FACT



The tallest building is the building where the crime took place.

Sexual violence was a common practice in the southern part of Rio. The perpetrators of these acts were encouraged, on one side, by the police's total inertia and, on the other, by the impunity in case they were arrested.

According to comments heard then, other girls had already escaped from the assaults of this same group of young delinquent boys who made the corner of Miguel Lemos street their meeting point, near the Remington School where Aída studied typing.

I myself was told of two other attacks from the same perpetrators who were involved in my sister's tragic predicament. One of these attacks had just happened a day before, when the girl was able, right at the door of the "Rio Nobre" building – as she described to me - to break free from the hands of her attacker, who wanted, at any cost, to pull her violently into the building. Minutes before, one of the aggressor's buddy, riding a scooter, stopped and said something to him that was probably related to this girl.

A second attack was also revealed to me. A man who knew everyone who was involved in all the criminal acts told me in a private conversation: "I myself have already rescued my niece from this group".

Physical violence per se already began at the social elevator door (which was rarely used by the residents of the building), into which unfortunately our sister Aída was violently pulled inside. The detail of this first assault, that is, when she pulled into the elevator by force, was revealed to our family by no less than four witnesses who preferred to remain anonymous at that time. Aída felt fear because of the aggression and betrayal and reacted by screaming ("I heard some screams," someone said to our mother when she arrived at the scene in the night of the crime), but the elevator was already in motion. It stopped at the 12th floor and, according to the first reports published in the July 16<sup>th</sup>, 1958 edition of the daily newspaper "O Globo", it was inside apartment 1201 that was still under construction and thus, full of rubble and in complete darkness, with the floor not yet overlaid with parquet block flooring, that Aída continued to defend herself against the attacks of two or three perpetrators and where she, at first, stumbled over wooden pieces (frames more precisely) (page 241). The person with her also stumbled: "The two stumbled into pieces of wood" (page 445v) because "the apartment was still being worked on and in total darkness" (page 92v).

Reporters from the "O Globo" newspaper, who visited apartment 1201, detected some evidences that intrigued them, for instance: on one of the windowpanes, there were marks of thin fingers, from top to bottom. Several empty cement bags were laid out on the floor like a bed. There were dozens of footprints all over the floor, with greater incidence around the improvised bed. Still scrutinizing the big glass windowpane, they saw at the bottom of the wall a stain that they concluded was blood.

The fact that the struggle happened inside apartment 1201, like we imagined it did, is not at all strange to the Judicial Records. It was an uninhabited apartment that was still under construction. A Police Commissioner inspecting the building "went down with doctor "X". Both were discussing whether the girl had fallen from the twelfth or eighth floor because they knew that the twelfth floor was still not overlaid with parquet block flooring and therefore, the markings of the floor should have stayed on the sole of her sandal. He tried to look carefully, but due to the very poor light

conditions of the moment, he was not able to form a conclusive judgment about it” (page 183).

Intriguing reference came to light when the eighth floor was mentioned. More than once this floor was mentioned (pages 16v, 46, 195v, 246). The doorman had gone up the stairs with the police to the seventh floor and finally on up to the eighth "where they saw that the door was closed so, this is why they went back to the seventh floor..." (page 23v).

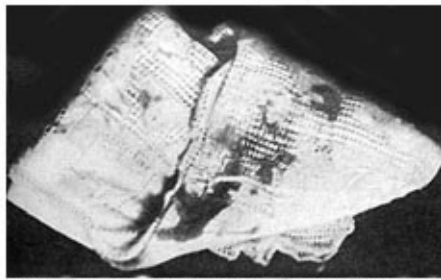
In another passage, one of the deponents noted that the elevator was passing by the eighth floor and went straight to the lobby. When going down "there was an unusual delay" (page 442v).

In the beginning, there was some doubt whether the body was pushed off from the window of this apartment to the point that the police and experts actually examined it: "they got the key to apartment 801 that was under the custody of the doorman. Once inside, nothing out the ordinary was found" (page 91).

At that time it was said that one of these apartments was used for immoral purposes. The Police Commissioner's question to a colleague that was already at the spot was very relevant: "Do you know if there are any apartments being used for licentious means?"... to what the other Police Commissioner answered: "I don't think so" (page 181v). This answer was extremely vague and quite strange because first: there was only one apartment per floor and second: some apartments were still not occupied which means that they could have been easily used. The actual reason for such evasive answer was because on the seventh floor lived an Air-Force Colonel. The building administrator was also a Colonel but an Army Colonel who had earned a reputable name at the prestigious position as Chief of DOPS (Department of Political and Social Order) and they did not want to deal with these two highly ranked officers.

Aída lost consciousness as a result of her tenacious but exhausting resistance. Her body in a state of complete malnutrition was carried to the top of the building using a spiral staircase that led to the terrace from the 12th floor. She was placed on the parapet wall and pushed off to Atlântica Avenue. It was revealing and important to the case the question posed to the doorman of the building by one of the individuals involved: "On

*the day the girl was pushed off* (italicized by the author), didn't you come down using the stairs?" (page 26). A few moments after her body landed on the ground, belongings such as a purse, notebook and books were seen lying next to her. Inside the purse, the police found a bloodstained handkerchief and broken glasses. The handkerchief was used to wipe off the blood that flowed from the upper lip as a result of a violent slap she had received. The handkerchief indicates that it was folded when it was used. Experts reached this conclusion through the process of juxtaposition of spots.



The handkerchief stained with blood.

The folded handkerchief, abundantly stained with blood inside the purse, was proof of Aída's resistance against those who were interested in making everyone believe that, all the signs of aggression found in her body, were due to her fall. However, there were also irrefutable signs that clearly characterized the fierce struggle that the boys had to immobilize the victim such as the long and vast numbers of rips both on the skirt and petticoat, as well as the violent yank in order to tear off her bra, deep nail-scratches on one of her breasts (right side) and a bruise on her upper lip, produced by a severe blow (page 353). Even in the absence of evidences such as these, violence was widely proven during the reconstitution of the crime that showed that she had received a brutal slap and that her garments were ripped. Not even an act of sexual deviancy was missed, when one of the attackers sought "to turn her back to him" and "the girl tried with all her strength to push him away"; (pages 49 and 397v). "He tried to turn her, so that she would be with her back to him but she fought strongly not allowing this to happen..." (page 397). One of the participants of this fight "saw that one of the culprits was wrestling with Aída and struggling immensely to subdue her by force... and being prostrated over Aída's back, he had either his hands or one hand close to her breast (page 93v). It was even postulated that this act - followed by a strangle hold in order to

subdue her – would be the moment when she lost consciousness or was choked to death. But this was never proven, although it was said at the time as well as printed by the press that the Investigation had found marks that showed that there had been "an attempt to strangle the victim".

Aída spoke very few words during the fight (at least that's what the defendants said in their statements during the Case) and the words she did speak were: "*Let me go*" and "*I'm a virgin*" (pages 45 and 197v). She was a devotee of Saint Maria Goretti, an Italian 12 year old girl that was a chastity martyr. Aída would write in blood what she had written in her personal notebook: "I'd rather die than sin". One day after the crime, inside the necropsies sector at the Forensic Medicine Institute headquarters, the examination of the body proceeded being conducted by the medical examiners, doctors Mário Martins Rodrigues and Rubens Pereira de Araújo, who were recommended by the Director of the Forensic Medicine Institute, Dr. Jessé de Paiva. After accurate inspection of the body, bruises, abrasions and obvious traces of various abuses were detected. Substances from the vaginal canal and anorectic ducts were collected and put onto slides for sperm analysis (page 60v). Fragments of a black knitted fabric were also analyzed. On August 1, the medical examiners informed their findings: Negative (page 172).

While examining the body, they also performed other meticulous analysis. Material was removed to detect the possible presence of barbiturate or toxic substances (page 65) as well as to test and determine if alcohol had been consumed (page 172). None of these elements proved to be present.

The rigidly severe murder, the violent sexual assault, as well as the rape attempt became evident. As to the last point, the relevant analysis from one of the judges studying the Case read: "... It is of no avail, in this case, the conclusion stated in the report on page 172... negative as to the existence of sperm in either the vaginal or anal ducts of the victim or in her clothes, because neither manly orgasm nor "*immissio seminis*" are necessary, but the "*immissio penis in vagina*" is necessary, and that was not consummated, as it seems, although the victim was endowed with complacent hymen (report on page 59). If there had been voluntary refrainment from the agents that were trying to achieve the opted (desired) target, at least what would have been left from all

of this, as a residue, would have been the crime of indecent assault. However, what the records reveal is that the refrainment from the rape was not voluntary, but rather a result of the victim's tenacious resistance. Therefore, I admit the existence of a rape attempt". Judge Astério Aprígio Machado de Melo (page 380). Thus, it was clearly demonstrated that Aída was not raped. *She died a virgin.*

## SOCIAL CONTEXT OF THAT PERIOD.



A common scene in Rio de Janeiro around 1958.

Remember that, in the 50's, violent and rebellious movies, like "The Wild One" with Marlon Brando and "Rebel Without a Cause" with James Dean, were shown in Brazil and touched the malformed psychology of some teenagers from Rio.

Rio de Janeiro was experiencing vexatious moments with the phenomenon of "perverted youth", who were also the protagonist of the famous "curras" (rapes). People expected a prompt and more severe reaction from the police. Families living in the south side of the city were practically helpless. Two or three weeks before Aída's death, precisely on June 27th, a homeless person had died in Copacabana. Fire was set to him by the criminal hands of a young man living in that neighborhood and rumors scattered rapidly postulating that the culprit was part of the same group that would attack Aída a

few days later (page 130v). There was no news in the newspapers making reference to any serious police inquiry or to even a simple police investigation alluding to those who were responsible for such a hideous crime!

It's important to note that the "Marvelous City" was still the Capital of the Nation, the so-called "Federal District". The construction of the new capital Brasilia (urged to be inaugurated in 1960!) clearly seemed to be completely absorbing the Government's attention.

To make the social scenario even more dramatic, drugs had already "settled" in Copacabana. It would not be a groundless assumption to say that some of those who were involved in this crime were already being lured by this addiction. There were already rumors at the time that there was a dope connection to the case and that there were also "drug-dealing spots" right next to the crime scene. One of these locations was frequently visited by those who were involved in Aída's murder.

It's almost impossible to know the full depth of the moral degeneracy of this group that tried to seize both Aída's honor and innocence. Unmistakably, it was the underworld of lewdness!

## THE UNKNOWN FACTS OF THE CRIME.

Many questions remain unanswered until today:

- 1- It is an actual fact, according to what was said, that Aída was already being followed, for some time, by this group of perverse youngsters, who had abhorrent intentions.
- 2- Was the "curra" (rape) planned for some time, having Aída as the main target? The definite article that was used by one of the deponents who questioned the guilty minor, is a clear indication of what the actual intentions were: ["X" is with the girl and wondering if you would have a place for him to take her...] (page 12v). He did not say that he was with "a" girl but with "the" girl.



- 3- Who were the key perpetrators within this group who introduced themselves to Aída on the night of the crime? It was said that such introduction was made by someone who either knew Aída or her friend. However, this young man was not incriminated, having only been a witness in the Case. Still in the same context there is a relevant question: who owned the keychain that was purposely thrown to the ground, with the malicious intention of luring the victim? It was clear in the Case that the other boys hanging around the school knew Aída (page 31). When they walked out of the school, she was accompanied by one of these boys, who was also enrolled in the same typing school (page 449).
- 4- Up at the apartment and more specifically, at the time of the struggle, were there other people who were part of the group (besides the two who were over 18 and consequently judged by the jury and the minor who was involved, but not taken into trial, but rather to Juvenile Court)? One of the accused persons said that “he knew the ways of the gang who always took pleasure in joining their buddies’ love encounters” (page 51). It was said at the time that, apart from these three individuals, an additional two or three other members of the gang also went up to the apartment. The question is: which ones were already hidden there at the time of the criminal harassment? One of the culprits, the fourth convicted person stated that, when the body fell, he was at the entrance door of the building looking for the doorman (page 12v). The doorman was obviously not there. He further justifies: “in the precise moment he entered into the building, the girl fell” (page 410). This same person was enrolled for quite some time in the same typing school that Aída went to and in the same time schedule as hers, from 6 p.m. to 7 p.m. Only two days after the crime (!), on Wednesday, this person was there in the classroom in the same exact time as if nothing had ever happened (page 14). He was present when the keychain was intentionally thrown to the ground. He was there as well when the fatal encounter began and was the one who offered to search for a place to where the victim could and would be taken.
- 5- Who had the lugubrious idea of pushing the body off the parapet wall? Two hypotheses came up at the time: would it have been the initiative of the boys themselves, assuming she was dead or, was it the advice given by residents and

visitors of the building? Whatever the case may be, the goal was to simulate a suicide.

- 6- Who pushed the body off and who were the people present at that exact moment on the terrace?
- 7- Who were the authorities on the second floor of the building in apartment 201 (which was the residence of one of the culprits), playing cards (page 90v) in the exact moment of the hostilities? And, after they were immediately notified of what had happened at the top of the building, what measures did they take? The Police Records show that, at least one Chief Police Officer was at the location when the body fell (pages 181v and 443v). A hypothesis arose whether or not one of the authorities ran to the top of the building when Aída was in an inanimate state.
- 8- How is it possible to explain a keychain right in front of the kitchen door floor of apartment 1201 where the service entrance was (page 91)? Was it pure forgetfulness of the perpetrators of the crime or, a staging to make people believe that the ascension was made using the service and not the social elevator, in order to compromise the victim of collusion with the killers? Likewise, how is it possible to explain the experts' discovery that the main door to apartment 1201 was closed by setting up a wooden barrier (page 147)? Doesn't this suggest that the culprits were trying to insinuate that the ascension was made using the service and not the social elevator? But the observation made by the Investigating Team regarding the interior of the service entrance debunks the hoax: "Its interior, however, revealed nothing that could lead to the conclusion that the young lady had been in there" (page 91).
- 9- Who came down from the top of the building to put Aída's books and purse right next to the body on Atlântica Avenue? Mr. Leonil Faria Neves told our mother that he saw Aída falling without the books and in the instant she fell, the books were not there on the ground with her. He provided our mother this information when she was undergoing teeth treatment at the General Polyclinic of Rio de Janeiro. He also mentioned that he lived at 319 Tapuruá Street, which is a district of Penha. This gentleman was undoubtedly one of the first persons

who either saw the body falling or saw it when it was already on the sidewalk. He added that there was a very nervous boy standing just a slight distance from the body. Behind him was a lady who commented: "poor girl"! Right after, she went and adjusted Aída's garments because they were completely rumpled.

- 10- Who were these witnesses and why didn't anyone go looking for them and get their statements? Apparently, they were not related to the plotting of the "curra" (rape). However, they were seen entering the elevator on the night of the murder!?

One of the offenders states that, since the door on the 12th floor was closed, he came back down. When he opened the social elevator door at the lobby, he bumped into "Z" and began to ask him a couple of questions but (...) this conversation with "Z" was somewhat difficult because an older lady entered the elevator" (page 19v.). However, the report written by two detectives from the Technical Police Division and presented in the Judicial Records mentioned "two older ladies" (page 92v).

In another moment, one of the witnesses revealed that the doorman himself, when asked if he knew the victim replied: "no, but moments before, two young ladies had gone up" (page 33). However, he neither specified which of the two elevators they used nor if the boys were already up there with Aída. The doorman, when asked, asserts that they were residents of apartment 901 (page 401). We were very disappointed that a more accurate investigation was not carried out with reference to those "two young ladies" who had gone up or to the older lady or ladies who hindered the conversation between "X" and "Z". Many times, these small facts may provide new directions in the story told by the performers of a crime, especially in this case, because there were rumors that not only boys but girls had delinquent participation in this crime as well.

## SUICIDE OR MURDER?

From the beginning, the hypothesis that it could have been a suicide was totally discarded by both the Expert Examination Team and by all who knew Aída. And here we like to pose a question: why was the Expert Examination Team only warned about the crime three hours later, more precisely at 11:50 p.m. (page 143)? What were the interested people doing, during this period of time, in order to mislead the police from the true and only version of the crime – murder - and make everyone believe that the death occurred due to self-determination of the victim?



The forensic expert Seraphim da Silva Pimentel examines the body of Aída.

How to explain the presence of a Police Commissioner and a Chief Police Officer who were close friends to the mother of the minor involved and were in her apartment on the second floor of the “Rio Nobre” building until late at night on the day of the crime? (page 378v). It was of common knowledge that the family of the minor as well as such authorities were very close friends to the Chief of Police of Rio de Janeiro, General Amaury Kruehl, who would later be promoted to the position of Second Army Commander and thus transferred to Sao Paulo.

It is a stated fact in the Judicial Records that, the first information that originated from the apartment of the involved minor and provided to the 12th Police District, was that it had been a suicide (page 182). However, one of our interviewees had already

alerted the police station immediately after the crime, stating that it was not suicide, but that three young boys had been with the girl at the top of the building. He gave the police their names.

The exclusion of the hypothesis of a simple suicide and that there should be no further discussion about it, was initially voiced by an immaculate man, the forensic expert Seraphim da Silva Pimentel. He, after having examined the body that was brutally injured during the sexual harassment suffered by her, ordered the arrest of the doorman from the “Rio Nobre” building, opposing, therefore, to all those who availed themselves of every means to try to make everyone believe, from the very beginning, that it was a simple suicide... The perpetrators also tried extremely hard to hide their participation in former crimes that they had committed before this murder (indecent assaults and attempted rapes). This expert told us that if it were not for him, the crime examination would have “died” even before it started. This experienced and righteous professional suffered extreme moral pressure to conceal the truth, but he remained unshaken. But unfortunately, he was removed from the Case and replaced by a person who was closely connected to the family of one of the offenders. Regarding the doorman, who had been arrested the night the crime occurred, believe it or not, was already back in the building exactly one day later, accompanied by the minor’s stepfather (page 399). There was a direct intervention of this stepfather, who was not only a high-ranking military officer, but the building administrator. He urged the police by ordering that: “as soon as the doorman was ready, he should be returned to his work” (page 194). To better understand this situation, this doorman had a very expensive lawyer who was being paid by this military officer. And, furthermore, at a certain point in the Case, he had 3 lawyers at his service at the same time! It is clear that the key to the mystery of the crime was with him but certainly, he was not the only one.

The hypothesis of suicide was definitely discarded by the experts when they found, in the outer wall of the building, between the parapet wall of the terrace and the 12th floor window, tiny leather particles. Examining Aída’s sandals, the experts found that the edge of the left foot pair had signs indicating that it had been strongly scrapped on a rough surface. This is because Aída, when falling, scrapped the sandal on the building wall. When falling, the body suffered no horizontal propulsion, in which case if it had, plaster would not have been yanked out at the corners of the parapet wall.

They went through great effort to put her on the parapet wall of the terrace, because the wall was built "slanting inward" (page 144). Even greater effort was made to descend the body vertically and very close to the wall. The experts concluded "that they carried the body probably standing up" in view that "her blouse was rolled upward and there were abrasions in form of stripes, on both the side and right side of the chest indicating that only one agent was necessary to cause such marks and perform the task" (page 334).

There is a detail related to one of the culprits, who in fact is a jiu-jitsu fighter (page 95v and 200v). He states that, after seeing from way up high, the girl stretched out on the sidewalk, "he felt both his legs and his body bend as if to also almost fall to the street..." (page 46). He also states that "he felt a strange sensation and that he went to the 12th floor holding on to the walls" (page 442v). Couldn't this detail mean that this young man had used a lot of energy, like if he had brought down the body (or helped to bring it down) vertically and very close to the building wall? It is only our assumption, because it is neither in the experts nor the police investigations reports.

However, this same young man did not discard this possibility, when he addressed the doorman with the following recommendation: "don't ever say that it was *me who pushed the girl off* (Author's italics) nor that I watched her jump" (page 371). This young man's own lawyer did not exclude the fact that, when he made the following observation to the doorman: "if the minor is the one who killed the girl or pushed her off (...), then there is nothing that can be done against him because he is a minor and neither to the other one who is also involved, because he is rich..." (page 400).

The fact is confirmed, or at least suggested by the doorman: "he saw "X" with the girl, but left before she was pushed off" (page 372v). Finally, it is the same minor that, perhaps by a "lapsus linguae" (a slip of the tongue), confessed his presence at the terrace when the body fell, "that after Aída had fallen, the deponent did not see "Z" anymore, clearly meaning that he was at the terrace of the 'Rio Nobre' building" (page 455v).

The experts are more specific: the height of the parapet wall of the terrace was 1.06 meters by 29 cm thick. The victim was 1.63 meters, and therefore, being tired and debilitated, could not have climbed the parapet wall even if she did not have her

belongings with her like the books and the purse, which, most probably, were lying on the ground at the spot where she struggled. These objects were either placed next to the victim's head at Atlântica Avenue or thrown from the terrace after the body was pushed off (the latter hypothesis was chosen by the experts according to page 149). Aída fell from a height of 42.35 meters, at a speed of 102 km, 207 meters and 60 centimeters per hour. When falling, her head was only 3.40 meters away from the border wall of the building, which demonstrates that the body was pushed off. On the contrary, this distance would have been much greater in case of spontaneous projection” (pages 150 and 347).



The parapet wall of the terrace where the body was pushed off from.

There is another point in the Judicial Records that was spoken very much about. The disagreement on the time-schedules informed by the defendants and witnesses had the clear intention of justifying either their absence at the time the attack occurred or when the body was pushed off, thus establishing their own alibi. This leads us to doubt the veracity of their statement and, at the same time, it leaves us free to suppose that the struggle ended well before the body was pushed off. It took the perpetrators of this heinous crime a long time to decide what to do with the body that lay lifeless in the apartment. They also had to decide who would have to immediately leave the building because they did not live there.

With reference to this last item, we would like to recall the considerations of the Curator Cordeiro Guerra as to his Opinion on the Acquittal, in the assumption that X had come down before the body was pushed off:

“It’s necessary to understand that, in order to prevail the defense that it was suicide, which was immediately discarded, X would have to disappear from the building as quickly as possible, because both the doorman and the minor would have been able to explain their presence there... the first because it was his job and the second because he lived there, but X did not. If X left earlier, it was neither due to disappointment nor regret, but because the suicide simulation had already been decided by all three, in other words, to push the victim off from the top of the terrace which meant, to commit a homicide. The reason for this decision was because the victim had already reached a state of unconsciousness that resembled death (...) Assenting to the solution to hide former crimes, did he take or not the conscious risk to induce the death of the victim? Did he cooperate or not, somehow, in the murder?”

Likewise, the culprits had to choose someone to carry Aída’s belongings that were scattered on the ground where the struggle had happened and put them beside the body after they pushed her off. Moreover, on one hand the defendants would be responsible for erasing any evidence both in the apartment and on the terrace that could lead the police to the certainty that a murder had been committed. And, on the other hand, leave sufficient signs like a keychain at the kitchen door floor as well as at the door leading to the main room, where the entrance is located when coming out from the social elevator, locking it with a piece of wood from the inside to make the police believe, besides having been a suicide, Aída’s connivance because she had gone up with her killers-to-be using the service elevator.

Countless details remained in obscurity because none of the implicated individuals were interested in revealing names of people who, in turn, could have compromised them further.

The indecent assault and attempted rape were still evidenced by marks and bruises on her body caused by a blunt object (a ring having the effigy of St. George that was used by one of the involved deviants and found during the investigation). One of the attackers, concluded the experts, was using a ring. On Aída’s right face, circular like to



oval shaped bruises were found measuring 14mm in diameter. Well, the doorman's ring had exactly those measures. The Judge determined that such ring be subject to further inspection (page 401). Another doorman, in the vicinity of the crime scene, told me that the doorman of the "Rio Nobre" building, shortly before Aída's death, had beaten his mistress in the back of the building. Somehow, he was able to get away from the policeman who tried to arrest him.

The doorman said that he came down from the top of building at eight thirty five p.m., while his witness, in flagrant contradiction, stated that the doorman arrived at the location where he was only at nine p.m. (page 401v), which means 4 minutes after the body had fallen. The doorman's participation in the crime cannot be denied. He himself revealed, in his first statement, that his right hand ring finger was hurting. However, having received legal notice from the police to present himself to the Forensic Medicine Institute for *corpus delicti* examination, he was advised, by the minor's lawyer, not to go to the Institute. If, as the doorman stated immediately after having received the lawyer's advice that this injury was caused at the moment he forced one of the doors of the twelfth floor when the police were inspecting the building, why then didn't he go immediately to the Institute for *corpus delicti* examination?



Aída's ripped bra.

Scratches on one hand and on the chest around one of the clavicles were nevertheless recorded (page 50). Furthermore, the Record related to the *corpus delicti* examination, found an elongated bruise on the left supraclavicular region and another excoriation, this one a bit irregular, on the outer side of the elbow (page 83v). These excoriations, as it was concluded, would have been a consequence of the victim's resistance. On the other hand, however, the second excoriation at the elbow clearly suggested his participation - probably along with a second person - when both were

descending the body vertically very close to the parapet wall of the terrace. At least it was more than just a "presumption" of his presence on the terrace, during the final scene in which the body is pushed off from the top of the terrace. The alibi that passed unnoticed in the first statement one day after the crime and presented by him at a later interrogation, was contradicted by more than one witness. In his statement when referring to these excoriations, he claims to have been beaten by a police officer, which of course, is completely unconvincing, especially because, by mere coincidence, the building administrator where he worked at was simply an Army Colonel and by chance the Director of DOPS who in turn was the stepfather of the minor involved. This authority called the 12th Police Station, where the doorman was being interrogated, more than once. In fact, the doorman said: "he heard all the telephone communications that an employee of the police station transmitted to him, saying that the Colonel was very concerned and that he would be released very soon (pages 400v and 401).

We have already mentioned the ring used by the doorman that was found during the investigation.

Besides this ring, it is likely that other objects were used to subdue the victim. Pointy like excoriations and wounds were also detected on Aída's body (pages 60 and 59v). Wouldn't these injuries have been caused by a "knuckleduster" or as some call it "persuader", a metal piece used to increase the bruising of punches? This detail of the assault, which was printed in the newspapers of that time, was revealed to us by one of our interviewees, who had obtained this information from a friend who had been with one of the culprits at that exact night when the murder happened. We also need to mention the deep wounds on her breast, maybe caused by teeth or fingernails (page 146)... wounds that have never been satisfactorily explained. If the examination of the dental arches of all the culprits had been done, it would have clarified a lot of things. Only one of the offenders was subject to this examination.

The ferocity of the acts to subdue the victim was further demonstrated by the brutal and vexatious injuries, being the first, a deep wound located on one of the nipples and the second, consisting of a "blood stained rupture of the urinary meatus, that injured the vaginal wall" (the latter aggression is mentioned on page 60v).

Was she just unconscious or already dead when her body was pushed off? Experts concluded that, at the time of the fall, there was little to no intensity of vital reaction... (page 204), endorsing the hypothesis that she was, at that moment, just in a state of physical exhaustion. However, the second hypothesis up to date is subject to speculation.

Finally, the non-presentation of the sweater that was certainly stained with blood and worn that night by one of the perpetrators was also one of the expedient schemes used by the Defense.

These and many other questions remained unanswered, awaiting the confession of the truth by at least some of those involved in this melancholy crime because it would, undoubtedly, soothe their own consciences and let both our family and society know what really happened.



The expert examines Aída's ripped petticoat.

## “A SEA OF MUD”.

It will never be possible to truly evaluate the game of influences that was at play and that was trying frenetically to cover-up criminals. There was also a degree of silent conspiracy that was being shaped to distort the truth. The combative Brazilian journalist and reporter David Nasser crossed swords until it came to a point that his own physical safety was threatened. All this was in order for dark forces not to prevail... The lawyer, Dr. José Valladão who was representing the victim's mother as an assistant in the criminal lawsuit filed against those responsible for the Aída's death, convinced of her innocence, did not hesitate to loudly and clearly proclaim such conviction. He would face the defense lawyers of the offenders, who in their vile and sagacious scheme to free their clients from prison, imputed all sorts of defamations and reticences regarding the victim's virtue. The offenders' defense technique was to put all the blame on the minor, who was also accused, taking into consideration that, because he was a minor, he would not take sit in the prisoner's bench. Afterwards, they would try to have everyone believe, at all costs, of Aída's acquiescence to the demands of the culprits and finally, prove that she committed suicide.

Much was already said about the role of higher ranks of the Armed Forces and important people within the Police as well as chief influential politicians, all connected to those who were implicated or, in some form, were part of their families. High-positioned individuals acted in the defense of those who were incriminated. A State Senator of one of the defendants would assist this defendant's attorney. Another, a praised Brazilian jurist, who was well acknowledged by the Science of Laws in our country and was a recently retired minister of the Supreme Court at that time, defended the defendant at the price of his honor and reputation. The first person to be sought by one of the defendants after the crime had been committed, was a relative of a Senator specially because of the friendship between the two families (page 568v). In turn, a relative of this lady, who was a lawyer and son of a Chief Police Officer, instructed one of the most important witnesses in the Case. Letters of solidarity to the family of the defendant were sent by both an Assemblyman and the state Governor (page 426). It was also said that the doorman of the building, who was on the run for twenty years until the crime had prescribed, was protected by a high-ranking officer of the Armed Forces.

Furthermore, it was the common opinion that witnesses, in significant number, who had much to clarify, were never heard. They were either withdrawn to far away locations or silenced for fear of retaliations.

As to witnesses who were heard in the Case, we ask ourselves if they were honest and veracious. Unfortunately, it is not usual to scrutinize each and everyone's life to be sure of their impartiality.

It is easy to imagine the danger suffered by those who wanted to come forward and tell the truth in a crime where so many powerful forces were in play.

The fear of speaking obstructed the paths that would have allowed us to know the whole truth. One day our mother informed us that on the day that the judgment occurred, a woman approached her and said she had been employed by the sister of an important witness in the Case. She revealed that, the day after the crime, she was fired for no reason and had nowhere to go. She had a six year old daughter who was going to a boarding school run by City Hall. This lady was supposed to come to our lawyer and tell him what she knew. However, as to what I was able to find out, she did not go talk to him because her friend, who was a police officer, did not let her.

Also, a journalist told me that, he was informed that an important witness lived in the countryside and he decided to take a long trip out there to perform an interview. When he arrived , he was instantly approached by two men who threatened and forced him to return immediately to Rio.

It was attributed to the Prosecuting Attorney Maurílio Bruno de Oliveira Firmo, who worked in this case, the expression "a sea of mud", referring to these hoaxes that happened throughout the Case.

It remains equally mysterious why an acquittal, in favor of the two previously convicted culprits, was given by one of the judges of the Case after they had been convicted to a very austere sentence by the Jury Trial, presided by Judge Octávio Pinto. On the day this acquittal was announced, Brazil awoke in disbelief!...

The acquittal motivated a series of objections throughout the country, being one of them published by the Press because it came from the Most Eminent Cardinal-

Archbishop of Rio de Janeiro, Dom Jaime de Barros Câmara, who personally met and spoke to Aída more than once, during visits he made periodically to the convent school “Educandário Gonçalves de Araújo”, in São Cristóvão, that was run by the “Filhas de São José” Congregation, where she studied for twelve years.

To calm the people down, the renowned and erudite Curator João Baptista Cordeiro Guerra, eminent professor of Law, reduced to ashes the reasons given for the acquittal, sending the implicated offenders to a new trial, where one of them was finally sentenced to 8 years of imprisonment. The other one was able to run away becoming an outlaw even though the police tried to find him and bring him back for judgement.

## AN APPEAL.

There is no doubt that the explanation of the details related to the 'curra' (rape), as well as the accusation and elucidation of the obscure points of the Crime and Case are of paramount importance so that Aída's innocence and purity can come to light. *We have absolutely no intention of condemning or accusing anyone, specially after so many years have passed by.* It is also important to know that our mother, before dying, forgave all of them, on behalf of her four children: Nelson, Roberto, Mauricio and Waldir. The letter dated 9-29-1975 had the following closing sentence: "with the forgiveness of all my children". It was signed by Jamila Jacob Curi. The reader of this statement can imagine the magnitude of this gesture because Aída was the only daughter and she was with no doubt, an ill-hearted mother that lived the rest of her life haunted by images of the desperate resistance her sweet and caring daughter held with her perpetrators. We sincerely want to give the culprits, who have also had a long painful existence, the possibility to start a new life over. Let them purge by means of regret their negative past and allow them now to only do greater good. Thus, they will be able to achieve peace and serenity and so will their families who have also passed through a lot of suffering.

Everything we have reported is still an opportunity to appeal to any and everyone who has knowledge of the facts that have been neither explained or sufficiently enlightened and share with everyone what they know. It will benefit society by making

it aware of the truth that one day will surface. Lies and blunders will not have the last word...

The knowledge of facts, as well as the popular reaction, without extremism nor convictions or judgments, even after half a century, is needed so that similar cases do not repeat themselves. Moreover, it allows the new generations to know that Brazil has memory and that we witnessed a Crime and a Case in which corruption ruled and impunity reigned because it was ensured by the powerful influential people who, according to their oath, should have actually been safeguarding the peace of the families.

The author of these lines wishes that it be truly apparent to everyone his entire exemption of any sort of intent and that the family's attitude in regard to unconditional forgiveness be known. Likewise, he also wishes the readers to have these same feelings. We have a fundamental guidance in Christ: "be merciful, as your heavenly Father is merciful".

Cairo, July 14, 2008, the 50th anniversary of Aída's death.

JULY 14, 1958.



Her last picture just before her death.

*- DO NOT WORRY, MOM. IF SOMEONE APPROACHES ME WITH VILE INTENTIONS... I WILL SCREAM... I WILL FIGHT UNTIL DEATH... BUT NOBODY WILL EVER TOUCH ME. I WILL NEVER ALLOW YOU TO FEEL ASHAMED BECAUSE OF ME.*

In order to give a solemn tone, these words should be uttered with a slow and deep voice. Two or three days before her death, Aída got up from the chair she was sitting in that was in our very small living room and said these words with strong conviction while standing in front of our mother. Her attitude surprised our mother, especially because she was always so kind and tender and had a very sweet and lovely voice. She implied, by the tone of her voice, that she would never admit anyone to think anything less than noble of her in case she fell into some sort of trap thinking she would have a less determined and heroic attitude.

Times were really iniquitous in Rio at the end of the 50s. Mom felt obliged to warn my sister of this because she had just left boarding school that was run by nuns a few months before:

- “Be careful, my daughter! Trust no one. Out there be suspicious of everything and everyone. Don’t ever imitate or envy girls who say they are modern”.



Young people today certainly ignore what was the second half of the 50s, with the sudden explosion of permissiveness and the inversion of values, that unfortunately influenced a small fraction of the youth in Rio.

“Rock'n Roll”, “playboys”, “blue jeans”, “waves”, “night life”, “drug spots”, (the famous) “curras” (rapes) ... and many other foreign and non foreign words were continuously being incorporated into our daily language.

The protagonists of the terrible sexual crimes and disastrous adventures were being extensively spotlighted by the Press through shocking photos and appalling facts under the known title “Rebels Without a Cause”. Accepted by some, rejected by others, the term characterized a misguided but significant minority that was bringing uneasiness to families.

Aída, while not actually knowing how far human wickedness could reach, was fully aware of the dangers that every girl was exposed to. Proof of this is the letter dated September 20, 1957 that she wrote to one of us a few weeks before leaving the boarding school in which she had studied for many years:

"I'm very happy because I'm going home in December. I want to help mom as much as possible. Now she needs to rest, because she is very tired and I want to give her all my support.

I ask you to please never forget to pray for me, especially in these last few months, so that I never cease to be a respectable girl and that I don't forget my obligations, because no one can ignore the temptations I will go through in this new phase of my life”.

After twelve long years living with the nuns, she said goodbye and promised she would bring them her first salary in sign of her gratitude.

Mom insisted that Aída be a well educated lady in order to attain a good placement in the work market. In October, if everything went well, she would compete in a civil service examination to try to work in an autarchy.

Her days flew by because they were literally taken by several appointments. She had no free time to the point that, from the short period of time she had left her boarding

school (only seven months before), she still wasn't able to make any friends. Her life was divided between classes and work...work that she was doing at our brother Nelson's shop on Carioca Street.

She had joined the "Cultura Inglesa" school for english classes at 4228 Atlântica Avenue and had private lessons in Portuguese. She also learned typing at the Remington School on Miguel Lemos street, in Copacabana, attending classes from 6 to 7 p.m.

Her schedule was really full. On the day of her death, there was no time for her to either have dinner or a quick snack. Mom advised her:

- "Aída, eat something before going to class".
- "Mama, I'm running late..." – she said.

And Aída left to strive not only for her life but for her virtue.

Unfortunately, that fatal day she never came home after 8 p.m. That afternoon, on July 14, Mom still spoke to her:

- "Listen, come back soon so you won't miss the soap opera".

They listened to the soap opera called "Aqueles Olhos Negros" (Those Black Eyes) on the radio.

That night, however, Aída was late. Mom was sitting at home waiting for her because she had never taken so long. Just slightly over thirty minutes was time enough to go from Copacabana to our home. We lived at 11 Marques de São Vicente Street apartment 201 in the district of Gávea. The first half hour could be accounted for because of a possible transport delay... or perhaps due to some other kind of traffic difficulties... The minutes went by but Aída did not show up.

Around 10 p.m., my older brother Nelson arrived home and was surprised to see my mom in that deep distress state. He tried to calm her down by telling her that he was going to get his car and search for Aída. The first place he went was the Remington School where she studied typing. Nothing! He thought that maybe she was run over and decided to go to the Miguel Couto Hospital which was fairly close to our house.

Perhaps an “unidentified” victim could have been committed there maybe due to an accident or maybe because of some other reason.

But, when he turned the corner of Miguel Lemos street with Atlântica Avenue, right in front of # 3388, he stumbled into a large gathering of people.

- Oh No... No... No way! Impossible! - he thought, as if to ward off the painful feeling.

He jumped out of the car and started coming closer. He elbowed through the crowd and witnessed the most horrifying scene: Aída laid dead, sprawled on the ground. Her head was in a pool of blood that stained the sidewalk. Envisioning what our mother would suffer when facing so painful and petrifying scenario, his immediate reaction was to try to provide her beforehand with some sort of medical assistance to hopefully minimize the shock she would undoubtedly have once she arrived there.

At home, Mom was still anxiously waiting.

My brother Roberto woke up by chance around 11 p.m. and found it odd that the lights of the living room were still on. He approached our mom and said:

- “Mom, go to bed. It’s late”.

- “Aída is not home yet!”, was her answer.

Mom pronounced those words with a maudlin voice full of distress that began to take control of her. Suddenly, the doorbell rang.

Mom ran to the door. Surely it would be someone bringing news related to some kind of accident or that Aída had been run over... However, it was two unfamiliar young boys.

- “Is Nelson home, please?”

- “No. Who may I say wishes to speak to him?”

- “We’re a couple of friends from Miguel Lemos street. We would like to...”

- “Does this have anything to do with my daughter?”

- “It's nothing, madam. We just want a word with Nelson... Like we said, we're just a couple of few friends from Miguel Lemos...”

- “He went out for a moment. Would you like to leave a message?”

- “No, thanks. We can come back later”.

Mom's heart started to beat fast. They had mentioned Miguel Lemos... It was exactly the name of the street where Aída studied!

Roberto opened the window of his bedroom and noticed there was a news broadcast vehicle parked in front of our house.

- “Mom, these guys are most certainly reporters”.

Roberto was about to open the door to go talk to them when the door bell rang once again:

- “Mom, just let me get it”.

The reporters, who had hidden the fact from my mother, then told Roberto the whole truth.

- “Mom, please stay here...” - he said, preparing himself to leave.

- “No way. I'm going too” – my mom insisted.

The news broadcast vehicle took them towards Copacabana. Along the way, the reporters were commenting the case in low voices and Mom just realized that it was, at best, an accident.

At the location, the crowd of onlookers had increased. Escorted by Roberto, Mom walked to the center of the crowd and looked terrified:

- “Dead”!?

- “It's my daughter”!

Trying to imagine what those first moments were following that very instance, only those who are mothers are capable of understanding. If only she could hear a single

word coming from her daughter's lips or feel her hot breath at that moment of agony! Not even that! Mom burst into a convulsive bewailing. She remained totally frozen, as if petrified. Nevertheless, she didn't collapse. She didn't know absolutely anything of what had happened! She didn't know if her idolized daughter was hit by a car or what the real cause of death was. To mom, at that point everything was an enigma. And at that moment, what was the point of knowing the cause of her death!? She was certain of one thing: Aída, her only daughter, wasn't there anymore to receive her endearments.

My little brother and I, on the occasion of the event, were studying at a seminary in São Paulo, in the city of Jundiaí. We received the news the following day. The Dean, after preparing my spirit, gave me the news of Aída's death, saying that a newspaper clipping that had come into his hands reported the version of a possible suicide. I knew that this interpretation of the fact was absolutely absurd. I knew my sister very well. And when he told me that the police were looking for suspects, Maria Goretti's image immediately came to my mind. Many times she and I had exchanged ideas about this Italian little saint who was the martyr of her honor. I was absolutely sure that, after clarifying the facts, my sister's virtue would become evident. And I remained calm. That day, my brother and I helped in the mass that was dedicated to our sister's soul. Father Alberto Betke, who had brought us to the seminary and knew Aída very well, did not even have the slightest doubt about whether or not to celebrate the mass, despite the first version having been ruled as: suicide.

On the day of the funeral, the coffin was carried by young girls who had been her colleagues. These girls, after arriving at the cemetery, as usual, opened the coffin for their last farewell. She looked beautiful, wearing the same dress in white fustian, with a laced hem, that she had chosen so carefully to wear the day she would leave the boarding school. Her face – her colleagues recalled very well - showed remarkable peace, almost as if with a smile.

An acquaintance murmured:

- "God knows why He chose her... I saw her receiving the Holy Communion the day before yesterday at the Gávea Church"!

Seven days later, the whole family was gathered in Rio for the seventh day mass, which was celebrated in our Melkite Catholic Church of São Basílio on República do Líbano street. By that time, many facts had already come to light. Monsignor Elias Coueter, later to become Bishop of the Melkite Catholics, celebrated the mass wearing white vestments. I don't forget the words he uttered later, referring to Aída's sacrifice: "the death of this little girl proves once again that we, people from the Middle East, have the blood of martyrs!"

## THE TRAP.

Only after some time we would know that Aída had fallen into a trap set by some boys from Copacabana.

The "curra" (rape) was a social phenomenon with brutal and inhuman characteristics. The "curra" (rape) had its technique, its own wickedness, a unique slang. The Press at that time described the act as being: three or four boys or more, who planned, with criminal intents, to lure the victim through blandishments <sup>(1)</sup> and sophisticated ruses and as the final act, dishonor her. It was no secret that they had the help from some girl in order to achieve their vile goals. The South Zone of Rio became the favorite spot of such dissolute adventures engendered by these young offenders.

The Chief of Police of Rio, General Amaury Krueel determinedly tried, after this crime, to do something to end the moral explosion that was, for a long time, a reality among a small array of the youth, which brought about a negative repercussion as to the peace and safety of homes. However, this constraint came a bit too late. Many young ladies had already been attacked in the former capital of Brazil!

According to the data gathered from the Judicial Records of the Case, the facts

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*(1) The usual blandishments of the "curra" (rape) resulted, in the case of Aída, in lying, hypocritical and treacherous words and attitudes, that were never corresponded by her at any moment.*

that led to Aída's death ensued as follows: <sup>(2)</sup>

“After her typing class at the Remington School at 44 Miguel Lemos Street, in Copacabana, Aída left this course in the company of a colleague. Both studied there in the same time-schedule, from 6 to 7 p.m. They headed, like all other times, towards the bus stop. This is when Aída was approached by some boys who were used to gathering around Miguel Lemos Street. This happened around seven-thirty p.m. Aída at the time was 18 and her colleague 36. With regard to the boys, the youngest was 16 years old and the others, between 18 and 22. The doorman that worked in the building where the crime occurred was 27”.

### **The Keychain.**

Initially attracted by questions concerning a keychain thrown to the ground by one of them, Aída, always righteous and innocent in her thoughts, did not suspect the second intentions that were in the minds of those who approached her. One of them, to approach Aída and start a conversation, used the strategy of dropping a keychain. "One of the deponent's buddies reminded him about the prank of the key". Asking Aída if it belonged to her and immediately after "said she was very pretty" to which he received a dry and disconcert answer from her: "I don't want to talk to you" (page 84).

### **The Glasses Case and the Ring.**

Seeing himself dispirited and frustrated in his first approach and feeling totally rejected by Aída, the boy decided to employ another tactic. The Case is quite clear with regard to the precise act: "the boy seized Aída's glasses case"; "he quickly took the glasses case that Aída had in one hand"... "took from Aída the glasses case". (pages 45, 84 and 185).

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(<sup>2</sup>) *What follows should be read in the light of the last chapter entitled "Forgiveness". I say this to make it clear that there is no feeling of enmity nor even the least resentment in our hearts. Our intentions are to only put Aída's honor in evidence and show her entire innocence. The passages in quotes are actual words of the defendants or witnesses when testifying in Court.*

Aída asked insistently that the boy give the glasses case back to her but she had no answer: The boy merely said: "No! These glasses and case will stay with me and so will you". Aída said that "she needed the glasses in order to go home" (page 448). To her colleague she said "she would only go home with her glasses". (pages 84 and 84v). This same colleague states that Aída said to one of the boys who, by the way, was also enrolled in the same school at Miguel Lemos street: "you have a thief as a friend... he stole my glasses" (page 84v). It's easy to realize that, by the tone of Aída's voice, that it seemed she was asking for help from a boy she thought was a "friend". She ignored, however, that such "friend" would be the most interested person in preparing a place where her last moments would be.

In response to the insistences to return her glasses case, the boy replied that: "he would only give it back if Aída gave him a kiss". Aída's determination and attitude were absolutely clear. According to one of the people who were present at the time: "Aída did not give nor wanted to give the requested kiss" (page 516).

In vain she tried to recover her glasses and case. This was not a simple and harmless prank. If her glasses case was snatched from her hands and they refused to return it, the reason is obvious: "it was for her not to leave so soon". By snatching her glasses case, the boy had in mind to force her to stay with him. This is so true that such case was never returned. It would only show up again when everyone was already at the top of the building.

Besides her glasses, they also took a yellow-metal ring from her. The deponent states that: "it was taken from her purse" (page 21). She was then asked if she was married or engaged. She gave the boys an evasive answer: "she was engaged to a poor boy" (page 21). Wouldn't this be an answer referring to her spiritual choice? Even being quite unique, wasn't this spiritual option what she had always dreamed about... her consecration to God in her religious life? And, even if it wasn't exactly this, at least she would be referring to, with this expression, to Christ himself to whom, in a very special way, she was already committed to.

Note that the glasses, as well as the ring, wouldn't be returned to Aída neither before nor after she went up the building. They remained in the hands of the aggressors (pages 16, 370 and 442).



The case with the glasses would be in the hands of one of the assailants at the time of the fierce battling that happened in the apartment. "He handed the deponent a leather case containing the glasses saying: "look what I was able to take from her" (pages 16 and 45).

At the exact same time, the boy who had taken the yellow metal ring from her gave it to his colleague: "he took it from one of his fingers, saying it belonged to the girl" (page 16).

The glasses with the shattered glass inside the case were placed in the purse next to her body, more precisely close to her head. The ring was also found inside her purse.

### **The Purse.**

But the story of coercion does not end here. Besides the glasses case, the purse was also taken from her (page 405v). And Aída begged the boy "to give her glasses and purse back!", "She asked for her purse". By also seizing the purse, the boy appealed to an extraordinary resource because he saw that his previous efforts were futile. Inside were, besides the victim's intimate possessions... money (page 7). Without it she couldn't go home. This way, they forced her to stay with them because she had shown to be elusive and wary, by not reacting one bit when the boy passing by "said something" to her. He insisted in following her, but she did not pay any attention to him even when he threw the keychain to the ground because she answered him very dryly saying "she did not want to talk to him".

### **The Bloodstains on the Book.**

The stains of a dark red substance that were noticed in one of the books that Aída had with her were human blood, said experts. The statement is evidently based on scientific evidence: "the positive result is according to the chemical reaction obtained through the serum-albuminous precipitation, as per Uhlenhuth".

Such stains are identified on the purse, scarf and on the book. In this publication named "Corografia do Brasil" (Brazil's Chorography) that was from the "Instituto de Aposentadoria e Pensões dos Industriários" (Industrialists Retirement and Pensions Institute), there were several blood stains on both front and back covers, on pages 128 and 129, as well as on the longitudinal binder (page 213).

The statements don't show that this specific book had also been snatched from Aída's hands. However, one of the witnesses, who was present at the time of the event and interviewed by me, made reference to this book and said it ended up in the hands of one of the defendants.

Therefore, Aída was despoiled of everything she had with her that night. And these stains could have happened during the assault at the top of the building. One can easily deduct that this book, like the purse, couldn't have been forgotten at the location where the aggression took place, which was at the top of the building, especially by the person who was interested in making everyone believe that Aída had committed suicide...

### ***Was she forced or was it because she wanted to be there?***

Still according to the Court Records, at this exact moment, when Aída was trying to look for her belongings, the glasses and case as well as the purse, she found herself already very close to the "Rio Nobre" building (pages 84v, 405v and 406), or, more precisely, in the front of the building where the crime happened, according to the statement on page 12v. Her colleague, who, at that moment had drifted apart from her, would later become a witness in the Case. Although being only a witness, she was heard in the Notary's Special Police Department that is part of the Technical Police Division, accompanied by her attorney who, in turn, was the son of a Chief Police Officer. It was said that the Director of this Special Police Department was a friend of this attorney's father.

Her colleague told the boys to leave Aída at 8 p.m. at the bus stop (page 19). However, she very well knew "that Aída always emphasized that she had strict orders from her mother to get home by maximum 8 p.m." (statement from the same colleague page 449). Questioned about her conduct, this colleague said that she did not know if

Aída was "being forced or actually wanted it to happen" (page 447v). However, Aída told her that "she needed her glasses for the following morning" (page 84) and "that she would only go home with her glasses" (page 84v). This sentence itself should have been sufficient for this colleague to definitely understand that there was absolutely no consentment or acceptance by Aída. "When the declarant said goodbye, "X" was still in possession of her glasses case" (page 84v). Evil raged on that terrible night of July 14! By the way, this colleague had met Aída three or four months before (page 31v) and the day after the crime, on Tuesday, according to information we obtained, she was already back attending the typing course as if nothing had ever happened (!).

Aída, now completely alone, tried by all means to recover her belongings that were snatched from her hands. In her anxiousness to recover them, and being at the door of the building where the crime would take place and home of one of the culprits, she didn't suspect not by a bit what the boy's real intentions were... intentions that were way beyond anything she could ever imagine. It's not about being "naive" but about being completely ignorant as to the extent of the falsehood and wickedness of those young people who were entirely used to this kind of sexual violence. In fact, the 'curra' (rape) was already in progress.

### ***In search of the ideal place.***

While Aída was trying to repossess her objects, one of the boys in the group exited secretly in order to look for an ideal place where they could take her, without her knowing by far what was going on. By attentively reading the Court Records, we can say with no shadow of a doubt that at some point, Aída became suspicious of the boy's real intentions. They always made sure to keep her away from them every time they confabulated. They stated: "the girl was a distance away"; "... leaving Aída further away"... "she was kept at a distance, not being able to hear the conversation" (page 406v).

The guy who had thrown the keychain to the ground on purpose asked his colleague "if he knew the apartment where he could take the girl", and headed out to meet a friend who "normally used the terrace of the building to meet some girls", and

who "always said he took girls to the terrace of the building and offered them to friends". The chosen place was, therefore, "the top of the crime building"... the recurrent stage of debauched behaviors. One of the boys got the keys of apartment 1201 from the doorman because this apartment led to the top (terrace) of the building. The doorman "had knowledge of the meetings that took place in the 'Rio Nobre' building terrace".

Even showing firm decision and clarity in her attitudes, Aída tried to recover her belongings through good manners. She believed she would be able to reach her goal without making a scandal out on the street, or even offending the boys with rude manners or harsh words. She couldn't presume that young good looking boys would be able to such a horrendous betrayal and monstrous violence.

## AGGRESSION AND RESISTANCE.

The assault in the apartment was substantially proven by forensic experts. By examining the torn garments, the injuries on the body and the blood-stained handkerchief found inside her purse, they concluded that there had been a violent assault to the victim. However, through her heroic and virile resistance the culprits were not able to achieve their goal.

The assault was confirmed, with plenty of details, by the testimony of the defendants themselves during the Case. Evidently, they did not reveal the whole truth. They confessed at least what was utterly impossible to deny. But this was enough to get an idea of the insanity of the acts committed by the offenders. Perhaps, the sweet Aída, until the last moment, was hoping they would have compassion and let her go. She begged, cried, certainly called for her mother, sobbing, pleading, but eventually, having triggered their perverse instincts and because she wounded their human pride, these deranged criminals intensified their atrocities.

One of the defendants testified in Court that "her face was red because she received many brutal slaps, and some parts of her dress were violently torn. He explained that he didn't quite know where Aída's dress was actually ripped because he

only heard the noise of her dress being torn when the other boy pulled her dress” (page 444v). The boy who had pulled the dress declared that “when he pulled Aída’s dress, he did it with anger, because of the number of difficult situations that had come up” (page 51v).

One of the boys who was present in the assault declared that “one of the culprits, after grabbing the girl, began to beat her. The aggression consisted in giving the girl a couple of slaps and trying to lift her dress but she pushed him away (page 442). And continued by saying that “Aída cried in front of the deponent when "X" hit her (...) demonstrating to the deponent she was offended and deeply hurt" (page 445v).

One of the participants of the assault revealed that: “ "X" was trying to embrace Aída but she pushed him away, having, at some point, heard her say she was a virgin" (page 45). He further declared that "one of the culprits persisted, by force, to have sex with the girl but she endured negatively, claiming to be a virgin (...) having shaken the girl with violence (...) the girl cried repetitively" (page 16).

In mutual accusations, the culprits made it very clear that Aída fought vigorously while she still had the energy in her.

“The experts concluded that at the “Rio Nobre” building terrace, a crime of sexual nature occurred. (...) After the execution of the referred crime and possibly to hide or ensure the impunity of such criminal event, the agent (or agents) pushed his (their) victim off the terrace, located above the twelfth floor, to the sidewalk in front of the building”.

Her body, still according to the experts conclusions, before being pushed off, was in a "state of exhaustion". The Criminology Institute estimated that "the facts which took place on the terrace lasted around thirty minutes". It was exactly 8:56 p.m. when her body landed on the ground, according to her wrist watch that stopped at this exact time due to the impact.

Before wrapping up this chapter, it would be worth registering the conclusion reached by the experts Seraphim da Silva Pimentel, Murilo Vieira Sampaio and Joaquim da Silva Gusmão in the "EXAMINATION REPORT OF THE RECONSTRUCTIVE STUDY" (page 338).

- a) Aída Curi, lured to the terrace of the “Rio Nobre” building, after fighting vigorously or forcefully being restrained, suffered sexual assault.
- b) After having consummated such attack, the victim, in a state of exhaustion, was pushed off the same terrace, falling very close to the facade and landing on the sidewalk in front of the building. The possibility of interference from more than one involved when she was being pushed off cannot be discarded (author’s emphasis).
- c) Through the development of the scenario involving violence and given the time lag between the victim going up to the terrace and being pushed off to the ground (thirty minutes) and, considering the chronometric data that was obtained, all the involved persons would either be present or, one or two of them, would have left moments before she was pushed off. However, the violence committed against the victim was so terrible and intense, that it becomes impossible to admit that these acts of violence were carried out in this short period of time between their absence and the body being pushed off. This leads to the final conclusion that all those persons involved should have already been on the terrace - either as participants, or as mere assistants, when these acts of violence were committed” (author’s emphasis).

Here are the elements of the Case that I believe are essential to have an idea of the Aída’s heroic death.

Days after the crime, the medical report would provide our family amid poignant descriptions, the only verdict that would comfort us... Aída died a virgin! Nobody had touched her body. So we remembered what she had promised to our Mom three days before she died: *"I will scream ... I will fight until my death... but nobody will ever violate me..."*



Aída's ripped skirt.

## THE ACCUSATION.

On August 18, 1958, Marcelo Maria Domingues de Oliveira, who was the 5th Substitute Attorney working as the Prosecuting Attorney in the First Jury Trial presented the accusation against the three principal suspects. We would like to highlight the essential point of this Document that is on pages 2-4 of the Judicial Records.

"... by employing acts of violence, that have been proven by thorough investigation, X, Y and Z constrained Aída trying to subdue her to sexual intercourse, ripping her clothes off, brutally beating and slapping her. However, they were not able to achieve their goals because of the resistance that the victim offered. They started performing a rape but this was not consummated due to extraneous circumstances to their will.

Having failed the possibilities of sexual intercourse, the acts of violence continued. This time it was against Aída's chastity where they performed sexual acts that were unquestionably proven by meticulous Investigation. These acts continued until

the victim's energies had been totally exhausted because of her disparate struggle, bravely fighting in her own defense.

At approximately 9 p.m., with her clothes almost completely torn, beastly battered in a state of complete physical exhaustion, practically languid, where any glimpse of defense was impossible, Aída Curi was pushed off from the terrace of a 12 story building to the sidewalk of Atlântica Avenue and thus murdered, as precisely proven by the body examination report on pages 54/60v”.





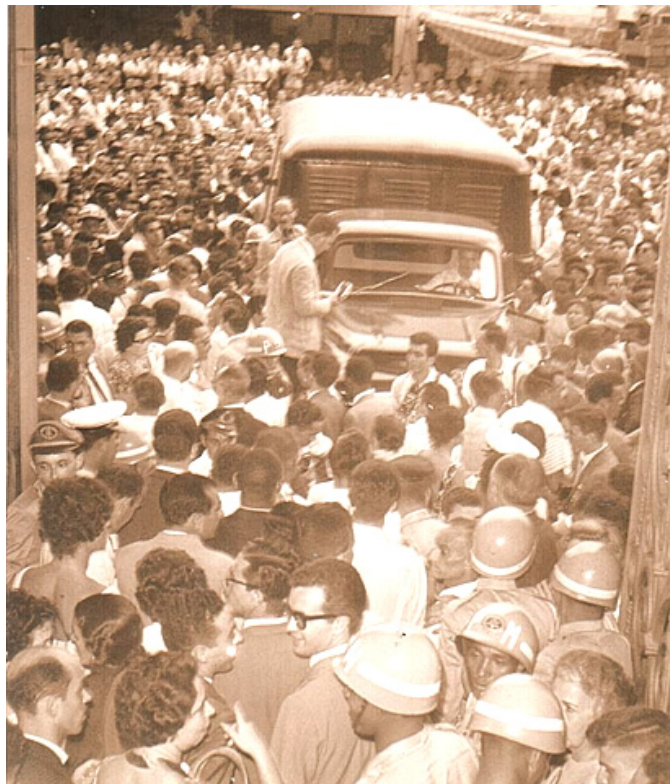
The city of Rio de Janeiro literally stopped to follow the trial of those accused of the death of Aída Curi.



Large crowd gathered before the First Jury Trial during the trial of the culprits.



The police try to maintain the order during the trial of the defendants.



The trial in February 1960. The people who were gathered in front of the Court wanted to lynch the authors of the crime.



The first trial. Judge Octavio Pinto announces the verdict of the Jury.

### ***JUSTICE STATEMENT.***

With respect to the Judgment of the Defendants, I would like to briefly highlight some issues.

Through the Accusation presented on August 18, 1958 by the Department of Justice, the criminal proceeding was established against the 3 main characters who were undoubtedly involved in the crime. There was a fourth individual but he was not accused because he was a minor and thus, subject to disciplinary proceedings by the Juvenile Court.

Regarding the 3 perpetrators that were over 18, one was convicted by the First Jury to 37 years and 6 months in prison but acquitted in a second trial (!). This verdict of acquittal that offended the common sense and human consciousness because of its absurdness, could have even put into checkmate the entire jury institution of our country and trigger its entire review!

This defendant, in a third and final trial, was sentenced to 6 years imprisonment. However, the prosecutor appealed to the sentence given and this verdict was increased

to 8 years. The second defendant's sentence was set 1 year and 3 months while the third one, the doorman of the building, was sentenced, in his first trial along with the first defendant, to 30 years in prison but was also acquitted almost immediately afterwards. When the acquittal was revoked, a warrant of arrest was issued against him and he became a fugitive. Had he been found, he would have been submitted to a new jury for a new sentence. However, the prescription of 20 years ended a long time ago.

## **THE OPINION OF THE ATTORNEY GENERAL CORDEIRO GUERRA ON THE ACQUITTAL.**

Through special delegation by Mr. Cândido de Oliveira Neto who was the Federal District's General Justice Attorney, the Attorney General J. B. Cordeiro Guerra, who was in office at the time of the First Jury Trial, was appointed to be the second Attorney General of the Public Records and express his opinion on the prosecutor's request.



Cândido de Oliveira Neto

The prosecutor had appealed to the Acquittal sentence given to the three main perpetrators who were accused and over 18 and were held responsible for the crime of murder. The reason that was provided by the judge who granted the acquittal was, to our disbelief, "due to lack of evidence". Consequently, the attorney appealed for the annulment of the Lawsuit that had been filed as indecent assault and attempted rape. The sentence alleged that there had been "a lack of right of action", meaning that the lawsuit was canceled because this Judge's understanding was that such lawsuit should have been filed through a complaint by the victim's mother.

Based on the thorough examination of the three bulky volumes of this Lawsuit, Cordeiro Guerra prepared his Opinion on 26 typewritten pages.

After refuting the alibis forged by the culprits to escape the murder charge, his study argued the reality of the crimes imputed to the defendants. After taking into account the diversity of violent acts that were perpetrated to restrain the victim and rape

her, he decided for the plurality of agents recognizing the agreement that was woven among these agents for a common defense.

Judiciously, he analyzed the statements of the culprits who only presented versions that they thought would apparently commit them less. What they actually presented to attenuate their sentences were lying implausible versions. And he brings to surface, in a pertinent manner, the incontrovertible psychological Judicial fact: “people only hide what will compromise them”.



Cordeiro Guerra

Cordeiro Guerra continued to insist on the fact that, in a crime, there is no principal aiding and abetting neither accessory aiding and abetting nor necessary aiding and abetting or even secondary aiding and abetting. All those taking part in the crime are its authors. And finally, he makes it very clear that evidences that show a criminal involvement have a unique importance in any case.

Based on the Body Examination Report, he concluded: the victim did not throw herself from the terrace due to any previous syncope, nor because of her state of exhaustion (stress), for the simple reason that her blood circulation was suspended and this fact was proven by small hemorrhages that were found by the experts.

In the second part of his Opinion, the Attorney general discussed the chapter "The Annulment of the Judicial Proceeding". Right in the beginning, he refutes the judicial act produced by the author of the acquittal as follows: “With no embargo, the honorable Judge “a quo” was not convinced and thus, acquitted the defendants from the murder charge. The fatal consequence (Article 81, sole paragraph of the Code of Criminal Procedure) was his incapacity to judge the crimes against sexual freedom contained in the accusation”.

Right after, the Attorney general examined two other reasons that motivated the Judge’s decision to grant the acquittal.

He refuted the assertive of the Sentence regarding the mother's "false" legal poverty as well as her being the victim's legal representative. He makes reference to the report prepared by the police (page 179) that also confirms the mother's state of poverty. Then, considering that the Aída Curi case was a "complex crime", he emphasized that the initiative of the lawsuit when dealing with "complex crimes" becomes the responsibility of the Department of Justice and therefore not having to request the complaint from the legal representatives of the offended party where in this case refers to Aída's mother. Nevertheless, the mother "**did** represent in due course, invoking the protection of the Department of Justice (page 175) and making proof of kinship (page 176)".

Therefore, the Accusation is justified in this manner. The acquitted defendants will therefore return to the Jury Trial. He concluded his thought with the following observation: "Even if the victim's poverty had not been proven, the legitimacy of the lawsuit from the Department of Justice should have been recognized, as per lessons from the Justice and Federal Supreme Courts".

### **JUDGMENT OF THE FIRST CRIMINAL CHAMBER.**

On June 22, 1959, four months after the Acquittal dated February 6, 1959, the First Criminal Chamber of the Court upholds the Opinion of the Attorney General, Cândido de Oliveira Neto where it reforms the Acquittal sentence and rejects the annulment of the Lawsuit.

At this Moment, we quote the introduction of the VOTE of the three judges:

"The Judges of the First Criminal Chamber of the Court agree by unanimous vote, to allow the appeal in order to alter the contested decision and consider the lawsuit to be valid at the point it was nullified by the same decision and, therefore, X, Y and Z shall be indicted and brought to trial before the Jury Trial, according to the opinion of the honorable Attorney General (pages 874, 899).

They have decided as such because, for the enactment of the indictment, it is only necessary that there be sufficient substantiations of the materiality of the crime in the Judicial Records as well as enough evidences and circumstances of the responsibility. The lawsuit, not finding any genuine doubt, does not authorize the decision of acquittal,

because the weight of the evidences will be examined by the Trial Jury who are the ones who will form the Jury Trial and are protected by the Federal Constitution in Article 141, & 28. In the case of complex crimes - murder, indecent assault and attempted rape - it is up to the Department of Justice the initiative of the lawsuit, regardless of whether the representation is of the offended party or her personal representatives. The poverty cannot be denied in face of the pauper's oath passed by the competent authority and according to art. 32 & 2 of the Criminal Procedure Code. It is beyond any doubt that the crimes ensued after the formation of one of the famous "curras" (rapes) and to which the technique applied was developed by first employing blandishments and then, as the final curtain, the most hideous violence which led to the death of the unfortunate Aída Curi. The technical proof vetoed the spurious alibis presented by the defendants, and thus allowed the indication of their authors. Being the hypothesis of suicide rejected, the proof gathered in the Judicial Records proved the materiality of the offenses which were attributed to the defendants. The well proffered fundamentals of the Attorney General's Opinion came to undo, altogether, the argument that the contested decision put upon the evidence produced against the defendants.

Based on such grounds, the defendants, herein respondents are to be indicted according to legal provisions mentioned above in detail and for the purpose of undergoing trial before the Jury".

Federal District, June 22<sup>nd</sup>, 1959. Milton Barcellos, President and Judge who delivered the opinion. Alberto Mourão Russell. - Faustino Nascimento.

### ***IMPORTANT CLARIFICATION.***

Throughout this crime, it is also important to clarify a detail of great importance. Many ask: But how and why did she go up?

Mom could never forget what she heard moments after having arrived at the crime scene. Being there, before Aída's body, she heard a thin and fair lady who was dressed in black and by her side say:

*- This girl was never here before! Poor girl! I did hear some screams!...*

And by these words uttered spontaneously by that lady, probably a resident of the building or that was there at the time of the murder, Mom was able to clearly

understand that Aída did not go up there on her own will that is, "on her own two feet". From those words, there could only be one conclusion: Aída was led to the top of the building by force and was screaming when she was coerced into the elevator. (See Chapters XXI and XXII).

As to what has been narrated so far, it is clear beyond any shadow of doubt and, more than evident, the real fact:

- That search for a "compensation" of the years she stayed in school (run by nuns) never existed;

- That stroll holding hands with "the one" never happened. The statement is just downright fantasy!

- Neither was she seduced by "X"'s "sweet talk" because of her ingenuity;

- Nor was she "seduced" and attracted to the top of the building by lying insinuating words;

- Or even expressed any sort of "fascination" while viewing the Copacabana beach from the top;

- Let alone a shadow of acquiescence to "X"'s and "Z"'s shameless requests.

We appeal to those who are interested in our sister's true story to cease, once and for all, with all kinds of speculations, in order for the plight of the victim's family not to perpetuate...

*The readers themselves can draw their own conclusions: what happened was an undeniable evil approach; a perfidious plot; the victim's derision of good faith and trust; skilled maneuver to seize her belongings; sadism and extreme violence; strenuous superhuman resistance and ultimately; cold blooded murder.*



## ***VIRTUE ABOVE ALL VALUES.***

She reissued Maria Goretti's act. She knew the little Italian saint's story and was her devotee.

A saint of the East, John Chrysostom, referred to martyr women with these words:

"The more delicate the recipient, the greater the grace. The first woman sinned and died. Now a woman dies not to sin... What excuse will the fainthearted and meek men give, when women behave in such a powerful and diligent way?"

How brave you were, my dear Aída!

How proud we are of you!

What courage! What resistance! What virility!

You, Aída, did not hesitate a Moment to put honor above your own life. Virtue above all values. Your love for God above all things. I know what led her to have this attitude. She did not want to embarrass Mom. But, above all, I am absolutely sure; she rewrote with her blood what I read in her notebook:

**"I WOULD RATHER DIE THAN SIN..."**



Aída's grave is in the “Cemitério do Caju” (Caju Cemetery – Rio de Janeiro.),  
Ordem da Penitência, Lane 55 – Tomb 21.490.

## TO MY SISTER WITH LOVE.



The extreme offering of a life is never an isolated act or an improvisation but rather the result of long years of preparation in small offerings of the "present Moment" once it has been lived with great intensity. Her last offer was merely the culmination of a life dedicated to God and to others. There was something like a "spiritual growth" in her existence. It even seemed as if God was preparing her, day by day, for the final act.

Because Aída loved every moment of her life, she was able to display the supreme proof of her love for God.

At this moment, I would like to present facts and experiences lived by her as well as faithful testimonies of classmates and teachers. In my opinion, there's a valuable message in all this that should not be lost. For some, this may have been a gift from God to have been able to have contact with this girl. There were 18 years of intensive spiritual experience. I present Life, at a time when there is an intense search for young people who want to live their ideas. Aída knew how to die for them.

What is done in love prevails. Despite knowing that 56 years has gone by since her death, her message is still echoing in people who yearn for something deeper, something more spiritual.

Her whole life was like a “Song of Love and Tenderness”. At least that's how I see her existence. It was that kind of girl who had an innocent look and placid aspect strolling daily through the streets of Copacabana when going to her classes. It was that kind of girl – just like any other - but who seemed to hold a secret within her. And this secret was God, in Whom she believed with the utmost conviction and from Whom she lived permanently. Her pure and crystal clear look revealed the depths of her true being: an innocent soul.

Even in her discreet way of dressing, with neatness and extremely good taste for her age, she externally reflected the profound unity of her being. Those who got to know her would definitely agree with me in saying that Aída revealed to everyone who approached her, an expression of God’s harmony that she brought within herself. She was an unparalleled candor.

She knew that the world was evil and even said she hated it. However, she got used to only seeing in other people their good and positive side, being unable to either condemn, judge or criticize anyone or even presume that others would have intentions that were less righteous.

She passed by this world without tarnishing the radiance of her consciousness. Today, when I recall our conversations, I have the impression that I was speaking to a being who was overflowing with God in her soul.

I know that you, Aída, will understand the homage from your brother. It's just a small book, but it was written with all my love.



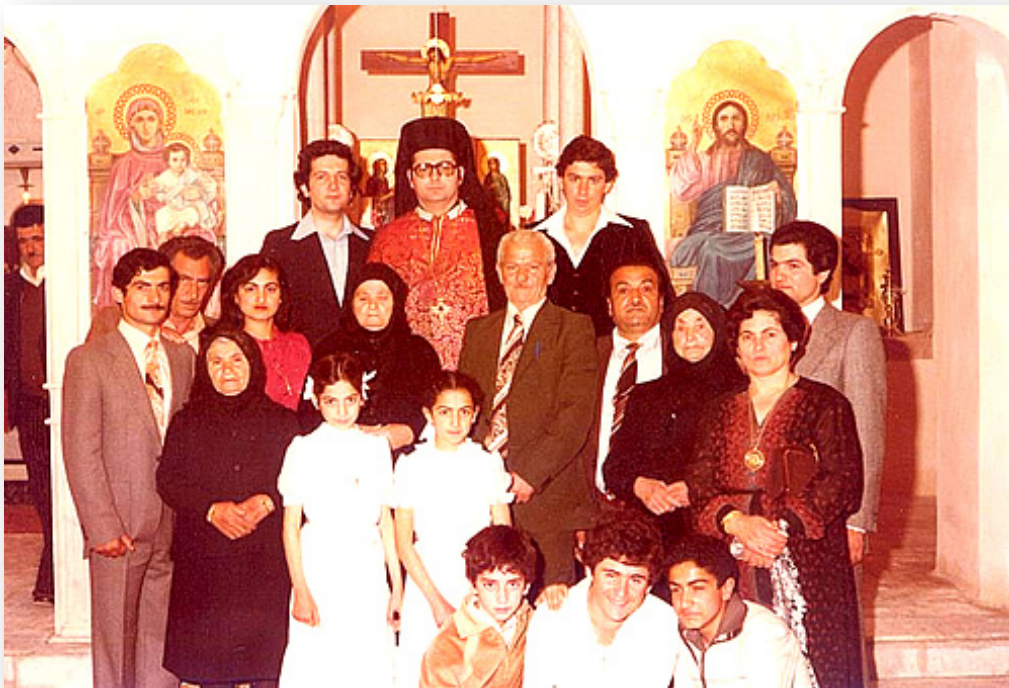
Saidnaya. The pilgrimage center in Syria. The family's birthplace.  
Church and convent of "Nossa Senhora de Saidnaia" (Our Lady of Saidnaya).  
At the right, the Melkite Catholic Church of Santa Sophia.



Inside the Santa Sophia Church.



Aída's parents.



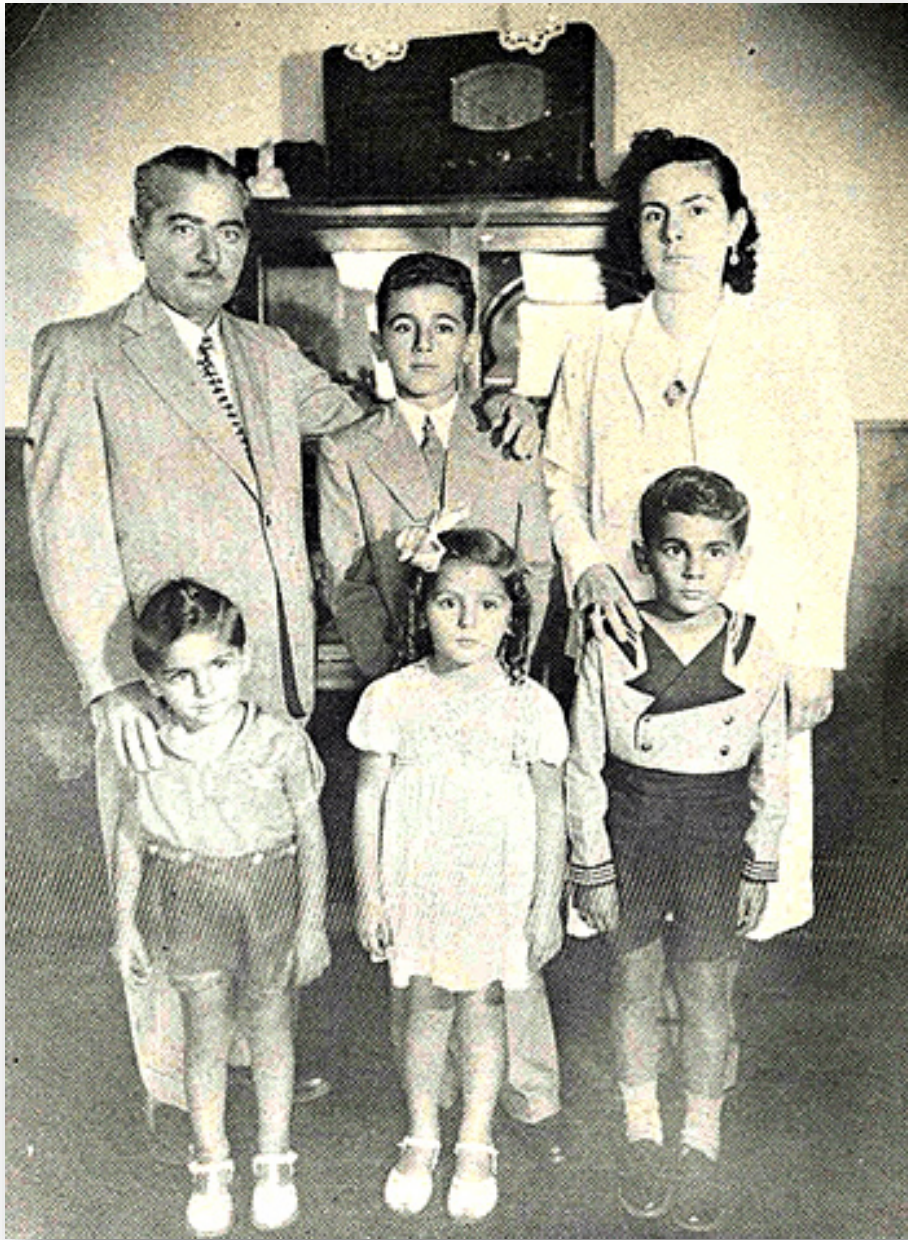
The Author and relatives inside the church of Santa Sophia,  
in Saidnaya, Syria, 1980.



Photos of Aída's childhood.







Aída, at the age of 4, in the middle of her parents and brothers. In the background is Nelson. To her left, Roberto and to her right, the Author of this literary work.



Mrs. Jamila with Aída on her lap.  
To her right is Nelson and to her left is Roberto.

**I**

**WHEN THE**

**ILL BEHAVIORS OF THE WORLD**

**BECOME GOD’S PATHS...**

Still at a young age, my father came to Brazil. Like many children of the East, who in the first decades of the twentieth century docked here to try their fortune, he ended up opening a trade.

He was from Saidnaya, a Christian village of Syria, and an important pilgrimage center, a little less than 30 kilometers from Damascus. There, at the top of a hill, is a superb Orthodox monastery that attracts thousands of pilgrims every year. Inside the sanctuary, there is the popular icon that is considered to be miraculous - the "Chagura" (which in Syriac means "Celebrity"). It is the icon of “Our Lady of Saidnaya”, whose painting is, by legend, attributed to the apostle Saint Luke.

Saidnaya is a Christian village that is lost in the middle of a multitude of Muslim villages. The population is divided between Orthodox and Melkite Catholics. Our family belongs to the Melkite Catholic community, a branch of the Catholic Church in the East, therefore connected to the Pope, and that follows the Byzantine Rite. We had among our ancestors - more precisely our great-great-grandfather - a priest who was the parson of Saidnaya. His name was Khuri Botros (Father Pedro). This explains our surname Curi - from the arabic Khuri, which means Father – a surname commonly given, in the Arabian countries, to those who had or have a priest in their direct ancestry. By the way, the Eastern Churches retain, to date, an ancient custom of the Church which is to ordain married men as priests because they are recognized for their religiosity and probity.

Our paternal great-grandfather, whose name was Mikhail, as well as our grandfather Assad, were both mayors of the small town that was the birthplace of our parents. They held that position for 40 years. Our great-grandfather Mikhail, besides being the Mayor of Saidnaya, was a member of the Civil Court which operated in a

distant village called Nabek. Our father owes him his cultural baggage, because Mikhail insisted in taking our father along with him to work in order to enhance his knowledge and make him an educated man.

Being the mayor of a village in Syria, formerly known by the name of “Cheikh el Balad” which means “The Elder of the City”, our family is still known today by the name of “Beit Cheikh” (“The Cheikh Family”).

My father, born on January 2<sup>nd</sup>, 1896, was the oldest of 14 brothers and sisters, having immigrated to Brazil in 1913.

When I was in Syria for the first time in 1962, the elders of the city told me that my father used to sing the masses in our Melkite Catholic Church of Santa Sophia. At this church our great-great-grandfather was a parson and that was where I was ordained priest on August 29, 1965 by Don Elias Coueter, first Melkite Catholic bishop of Brazil.

Present at this religious ceremony, besides my wistful mother who arrived from Brazil, were aunts and uncles (a total of 9 brothers and sisters from my father’s side were still alive) as well as dozens of other relatives.

Our mother, Jamila Jacob Curi, was born on September 15, 1910, at the corner of Bambina Street with Dona Carlota Street, in the district of Botafogo, Rio de Janeiro.

Some years after my father had arrived in Brazil, he was introduced, by relatives, to my mother Jamila Jacob, whose parents were also from Saidnaya. To be introduced by relatives was still a very common practice at that time in the Arabian environments.

It was in the Church of Santana, in Rio, that they got married on August 15, 1925. He at that time was a successful man at the age of 29 and was well established businesswise, with a shop at 86 Campo de Santana Street. She was just a girl who was almost 15 years old. Despite her young age, she matured very quickly because, having lost her mother when she was only 12 years old, she had to become the mother to her brothers Jorge and Miguel.

My father’s work was doing relatively well. When they left Rio, they settled in the city of Joaquim Felício, which is in the north of the State of Minas Gerais. In this city he had a house because he already had opened a store there. He was the owner of a

farm called “São Felix”, a few leagues away from the “Serra do Cabral” (Cabral Mountains). He worked in this farm with rock crystal a branch of business in which he became very successful. His tomb lies in Joaquim Felício until today.

The sudden departure of our father on August 12, 1944, at the age of 48, was God’s first hardship to our family. A newspaper clipping of that time, found among many others that our already deceased mother had, reports first about his death and right after lists some of his qualities: "The local people until today, deeply regret the death of Gattás Assaad Curi, an honest and family man, who was very kind and thoughtful to others as well as a real gentleman”.

We kept a letter from one of his employees, in which it was addressed to our mother that reads: "...for me, Mrs. Jamila, Mr. Gattás was my father before being my boss. The years cannot take away from my heart the longing I feel and the attention he used to give me and all the confidence he deposited in me. José Curi, his brother, was my business partner. I cannot forget your brother Jorge Jacob’s friendship, either. Mrs. Jamila, today I live in the city of Goiânia at the P-35 Street, # 27 – The Employees Sector. Please accept the condolences from this ex-employee of your so dedicated husband. I also feel, deep in my soul, the painful and horrible tragedy that happened to your daughter”. Uberlândia city, January 22, 1960. Signed: Raimundo Chaves.

Aída was born on December 15, 1939. We lived, at that time, at 436 Santos Dumont Street, in the city of Belo Horizonte in the State of Minas Gerais. Aidinha (“Little Aída”) was the way everyone called her. She was the third of five children and the only girl.

At that time, the financial resources our parents had were enough to meet the family’s needs.

However, with the abrupt death of our father, he had not had enough time to provide adequate savings that would safeguard his family. Unfortunately, not even minimum savings. He left us when we were very young where the oldest was 11, the youngest was 2 and half months and Aída was only five years old. Our father had a special feeling for her. He used to say with an endearing good mood:

- Aíndha is never going to get married because she is going to stay single in order to take care of me!

Someone told us that, when he was almost at his dying moment, he referred to Mom and us by saying: "My only regret is that I'm going to leave my wife and children!".

That chapter had ended. At that time, I was only four years old. Unfortunately, I was never able to know what resonance the word "daddy" had.

Mom now was a widow, with five small children. She left the city of Belo Horizonte and went to Rio. She was forced to work due to privations, being forced to sell the few items that we still had to be able to sustain us. She recalls that, in order to pay our debts, even the bath basin had to be sold.

Then, what was expected to happen actually happened! We stayed a while at an aunt's house and a little time later, at another aunt's house. Despite the generous hospitality of our relatives, it was embarrassing for Mom to walk into a house with so many children.

There, in the city of Rio de Janeiro, she was able to find for the boys, the "Escola Moreira" school that was located between the districts of Rocha and Riachuelo. Nowadays, this school no longer exists. At that time, this school held an agreement with City Hall. Through City Hall, Mom was able to enroll my two older brothers without having to pay. And due to this unfortunate situation Mom was facing, the Principal, feeling sorry for her, enrolled both myself and my younger brother as well. In order for her not to be away from us, Mom agreed to work for this school, as a nurse, a seamstress and assistant to the students. The school that was run by Mrs. Alice Santos Moreira and her daughter Flora, who were both excellent educators and full of Christian spirit, always treated us like their children.



Aída's father.



Aída's mother with her first son Nelson.

Later on, two brothers and I would be sent, by these two school Principals, to the “Seminário dos Padres Salvatorianos” (Salvatorian Fathers Seminary) in the city of Jundiaí (São Paulo). My two other brothers did not wish to continue at the seminary and therefore, they did not become priests.

Now, only Aída had to be put into a school. She was not able to stay in the “Escola Moreira” school because it was only for boys. She was six years old when she joined the “Educandário Gonçalves de Araújo” that was located in the district of São Cristóvão, in Rio. It was a free institution that basically received orphans. The “Educandário” was maintained by the “Irmandade da Candelária” and was under the guidance of the “Irmãs Filhas de São José”, a congregation of Spanish origin and sound spirituality. My sister stayed with them for 12 years.

## II

### **FIRST CLOSEUPS OF HER CHILDHOOD.**

Aída got to school carrying a beautiful black doll. She was immediately surrounded by girls at her age who fondled her. She was happy in the middle of her new friends. She did not even remember to say goodbye to Mom, who took the advantage to leave but was crying softly.

Then the first visit happened. Mom could never forget that day. Aída came and sat on her lap, putting her arms around her very tightly and kissed her again and again. For consecutive years, every month she would receive Mom’s visit. And almost every year she would get a prize... she would be able to spend her school vacation at home. In those days, the school’s disciplinary rules regarding vacation leaves were very strict.

### *FIRE COLOR HAIR.*

Her beautiful red hair intrigued the Sisters. Dyeing ones hair did not make part of the school’s disciplinary rules. They took her to a nearby tank full of water, washed



her head very well but the color remained intense. There was nothing artificial. From that moment on, the nuns had a very unique way of referring to Aída, presenting her to the others as a role model:

- Aída stands out from all of you... and so does her hair!

Our mother remembered another fact that happened a few years earlier. She started telling the story: "One day I went with her to the "Lojas Americanas" store. Aída was about four at that time. One of the sales ladies seeing her blond curls asked: "is she Shirley Temple?" (a Hollywood prodigy of the 30's known for her curly blond hair).

### *FIRST PIECE OF WORK AT THE WORKSHOP.*

By Sister Maria José de Oliveira:

"The first time I met Aída was the very day in which, after several years that I had been away, I returned to the "Educandário Gonçalves de Araújo" from where I also graduated years before. It was Mother Superior's farewell because she was returning to her homeland. That little six-year old girl called my attention, with her fire-colored hair and a face of an angel. Soon I knew who she was as well as a few details of her life.

Aída was eight years old when I started dealing with her directly in the "cross-stitch" workshop and I recall having given her, as her first piece-of-work, a huge tablecloth with 24 napkins in raw linen. She, being so small, almost disappeared behind the towel. She worked with a lot of pleasure, perfection and neatness and, in a short period of time, she finished the towel. Right after, she was given other pieces of work that she executed with the same pleasure, perfection and neatness".



The first group of nuns from the “Colégio Gonçalves de Araújo” school.

### III

## INNER IMAGINE.

The first traces of her moral profile came to us delineated by her first teacher, Lourdes Costa Leite:

“I was really Aída’s first teacher when she began at the “Educandário” at the age of 6. She was a lovely child... intelligent, obedient, sweet and humble. Ultimately, she was an out-of-the-ordinary child. Everything that I taught her, she was able to learn very easily. Every time I looked at her, I thought I was seeing a lily blooming slowly in the middle of all those kids whom I loved”.

The easiness of childhood would accompany her throughout her life.

There was no exuberant joy nor sadness or depression. Apparently, there was a certain melancholy in her eyes. However, in true reality, she was happy within. Her countenance was affable, radiating much peace and serenity.

Perhaps a word that characterized her well was... “Interiority”.



At school, Aída (right) with her colleague Marly Alves.

## IV

### WARM-HEARTEDNESS THAT IS NEVER FORGOTTEN.

From Sister Ignácia:

"One of the girls addressed me with an insult that would be punishable. However, I did not utter a single word. I confess that it did cause me a lot of pain. Even unwillingly, I demonstrated it through my face that was a dead giveaway of what I was actually feeling within.

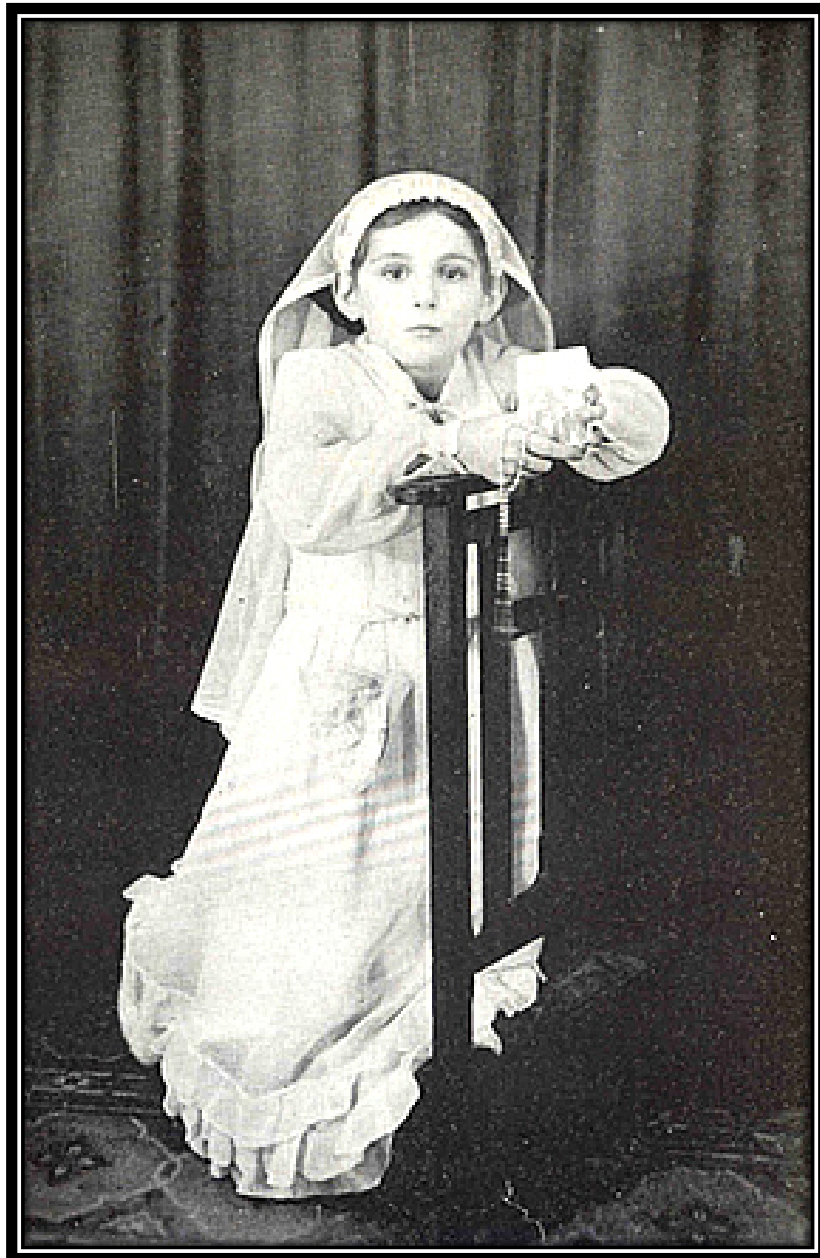
My sweet Aída, who was in the room with the others, neither heard anything nor was aware of what had happened. Feeling, however, that something did actually happen, she came behind me (as I sat at the table with my face between my hands), and extending her little arms she hugged me, with loving kindness whispering in my ear words of comfort. With this spontaneous gesture of warm-heartedness and pure understanding, my pain simply vanished".

Mrs. Maria Antonia, the college cook, never forgot the many times Aída voluntarily helped at the kitchen when the work load got pretty heavy. And when she saw that Mrs. Maria was angry, Aída held her tenderly in order to calm her down.

"She always liked to help me... said Mrs. Antonia... and sometimes I had to order her out of the kitchen so she could go play".



Sister Ignácia



Aída at her First Communion.

December 8, 1946.



The “Educandário Gonçalves de Araújo” where Aída studied for twelve years.



## V

### QUALITIES OF A NOVICE.

Once a week at the school where Aída studied, the Culinary Art's students would be responsible for the kitchen. On this day, the girls would have to prepare lunch for all the Sisters and Teachers. If there was anything left, then it would be divided between them. It often happened that, when all were delighting themselves with candy and snacks that they had helped to prepare, Aída would shy away from the kitchen and go to sit with the other girls. Sister Laura confessed that intimately she often felt embarrassed thinking on the example this little girl had given her when she, a religious follower, should have done that.

This same Sister told me once, referring to this fact as well as many others:

- "You know, Aída had qualities that not even a novice had!"

## VI

### "CHARITY PERFUME."

**From Sister Josefina:**

“The Educandário’ was going through some difficult moments. There was a small group of about eight rebel students who were against the disciplinary rules and who influenced the other girls with their attitudes. We fought diligently, without having any result. But then Aída Curi, the best student, joined this group. I was totally stunned! I was not able to understand her attitude and, because she was my direct student, I decided to call and reprimand her.

Aída explained herself by saying that she had joined the rebel colleagues not to increase their number, but to convince them to stop acting inappropriately and urge

them to be righteous and complaisant. She received an award because of this demeanor”.



Aída, at the age of 12.



Among the Sisters from the “Educandário Gonçalves de Araújo”.





Excursion to Corcovado (Rio de Janeiro).



Wearing the Educandário uniform and the best student ribbon.



Aída and the Mother Superior Eusébia Garmêndia.

## VII

### DEVOTION.

Whenever possible, I would return to the school where Aída had studied.

The Sisters used to take me everywhere inside the house. It would always be with inevitable emotion in their voice when they referred to Aída.

From the information that I have always received in these visits, I realized how much spirituality there was in my sister's life and, for this reason, she continued to be remembered, even though many years had already passed since she had left that school.

Still today, I seem to be hearing the nuns say:

- Here is the chapel. This little place is where she used to kneel. Her introspection always left us amazed. In this chapel, she often crowned Our Lady in the month of May. Once, she was chosen to perform the coronation in the “Candelaria”.

Here is the bedroom. She was always the last one to go to bed. She stayed for a long time praying on her knees at the foot of the bed, looking at a picture of the Virgin Mary which was close to the headboard. The girls used to go to sleep at 8 p.m. Sometimes, when it was 9 p.m. she was still there praying. Every Saturday she was seen bringing a rose from our garden and laying it in front of the statue of Our Lady.

Even after leaving the “Educandário”, Aída continued her simple but extremely significant routine: Mom told us that Aída made her prayers kneeling before her bed, eyes locked on a Jesus and Mary painting, asked her mother’s blessing and only then she went to bed.

They conducted me to a classroom where there was a portrait of her at her first communion. And the nuns asked the girls: “Who is she”? And everyone in one voice answered: “Aída Curi”!

- You know, Father Maurício, almost every year we read Aída’s story to the girls. This way, even the younger ones know her story.

In 1973, when I was invited to join the celebrations related to the 40th anniversary of the Congregation in Brazil, I saw Aída’s picture placed discreetly on top of the piano in the hall where a tribute was being held for the Sisters. Sister Laura approached me and whispered:

- Do you see our Aída? She is the one who is heading the celebrations!

The Sisters claim that Aída took her spiritual life very seriously. She belonged to the “Pia União das Filhas de Maria” (Pious Union of the Daughters of Mary), occupying, for some time, the post of secretary and writing the minutes. She was also part of the “Apostolado da Oração” (Apostleship of Prayer) as well as the “Cruzada Eucarística” (Eucharistic Crusade). The books of her choice, in Portuguese or Spanish, dealt with the virtues of Our Lady.



In this chapel, she often crowned Our Lady in the month of May.

## VIII

### MARY.

**By Marly Alves:**

"The Coronation of Our Lady in the "Candelária" Church was much prettier and more interesting than that of the school, because in addition to being crowned, Our Lady also received a bouquet of flowers that was placed in her heart instead of a traditional sword that had been removed. Right after, Aída said she wanted to crown

Our Lady, but in no way wished to touch the sword, even if it were only a symbolic act..."

Mrs. Jamila remembered that, in a religious party at the "Educandário", Aída dressed herself as Our Lady.

From Aída's own writing:

*"Being a Queen, she is very powerful and uses this power to do us good and overwhelm us with her graces. There isn't anything that we ask her for that she doesn't give us. All we have to do is ask her with all our heart and confidence.*

*She also inspires us to feel great love. She is the true Mother of Love. Just as we say that God loved men so much to the point that He gave his only Begotten Son to the world, we can say that Mary loved us so much that she consented that her son die crucified for us".*

## IX

### A DREAM.

When we were studying at the "Seminário Salvatoriano" (Salvatorian Seminary) in the city of Jundiaí, Aída assiduously exchanged letters with us.

When she heard that one of her brothers had left the seminary, she was found crying. Until today, we keep at home, as a relic, the letter she wrote to him on that occasion that was three years before she died. A letter is often said to be the portrait of the soul. In Aída's case, her letter will always be. In this revealing letter, it is easy to realize how well she was spiritually prepared to face the dangers of a cruel and fallacious world, to which one day she would be its victim.

*"Dear brother,*

*I become a little sad when I think that you left the Seminary.*

*I understand that you, having no vocation, should leave, but I am saddened because I know now that you have walked into a much different, evil and delusive*

*environment: the world. How I hate this world because I know that it will not respect your purity and innocence.*

*Be therefore very careful. Pray a lot and be a devotee to Mary. Ask Her to keep you under her cloak so that you never stain your soul with sin. Avoid vile books, movies and companionships that the devil will offer you trying to make you leave the righteous path. Do not listen to him.*

*After all, instead of talking to you, I'm giving you advices. But I think you will follow them because you will need them very much. I wish to always see you good and pure hearted, the exact same way the day you left the Seminary. Aída”.*

Aída always encouraged us to proceed in our vocation. In her simplicity, she used to say that, had she been born a man, she would certainly be a priest...

Several times I asked her if she had ever given some thought about being a nun to what she answered:

*- For the Moment, I have not felt yet the calling from God, but if God ever calls me to His service, I'll be ready to join the convent.*

Her colleagues told us very little about Aída's vocation. However, Marly Alves recalled that she said something about this issue. It was when some missionary nuns who did community services in the slums showed up at school. Marly noticed that Aída became very impressed with the simplicity of these Sisters because she made the following comment:

*"If I were ever a nun, I would like to be like those Sisters!"*

Francisca Miriam Silva made reference to a short conversation they had when they were both 17.

*- Are you going to the Convent? - asked Aída.*

*- God willing I will!*

- *Me too - said Aída. But first, I would like to live a little when I am out there to see if indeed I have the vocation...*

A few days before she died, Aída asked Mom:

- *What if I were to be a nun...?*

To what our mother answered:

- When speaking of vocation, my daughter, you and your brothers have carte blanche...

And after a short pause:

- And... would you like to be a nun...?

- *If God calls me... I would!*

Only after her death was when we found out that, for some time, she was thinking of being a nun. She had even chosen the Congregation! She intended to enter the “Convento das Servas de Maria” (Handmaids of Mary’s Convent), in the district of Jacarepaguá. The testimonial is from Cardinal Dom Jaime de Barros Câmara who, in the last years of school, was her spiritual mentor. She had delayed joining the convent in order to work a little and give Mom some comfort. She deemed as a daughter’s gratitude, the obligation of relieving Mom from the sacrifices she had to endure to guarantee our education after our father’s death.

His Eminence Cardinal Dom Jaime one day invited me to accompany him on one of his visits to the convent at Jacarepaguá. During the meal, he called Mother Superior and asked her: “Remember what I once told you that a young girl would join your congregation? This seminarian is her brother”.

In one of her many entries in the “Mariano Notebook” which is from the time when she was 14 years old, she wrote the following:

*“... so that my life be*

*Useful, Apostolic, In order to know and follow my Vocation... ”*



Wearing the Educandário uniform and the best student ribbon.



## X

### NOTES FROM A DIARY.

Aída wrote in shorthand in her notebook, notes she had made during a Spiritual Retreat where His Eminence Cardinal Dom Jaime de Barros Câmara preached from May 29 to 31, 1956. She had also written her resolutions and spiritual acts. Her shorthand teacher provided the following translation:

*"I would like to make a sacrifice each and every day.*

*I would like to make my confessions as if each one were the last one in my life.*

*Every day, I will try to think about Heaven, Death and Hell.*

*How happy I am! What a wonderful retreat! I made a great confession, because my spiritual Father told me I had made a good confession and that I could rest at ease.*

*It had been a long time that I had been asking Jesus to send me a spiritual confessor who I could fully trust and who had infinite goodness. Our Lord sent me Mr. Cardinal himself. I was prepared to ask him to be my spiritual mentor and, before I had a chance to ask him, he offered himself to be my spiritual father, since I actually called him my spiritual father.*

*Thank you, my Lord. A thousand times thank you! Help both my spiritual father and myself.*

*I was able to make a very passionate communion on the day that the retreat ended, which was the day of Corpus Christi.*

*I am very happy because Jesus is in my heart and my soul is pure.*

*Mary, help me to always love Jesus and I'D RATHER DIE THAN SIN (emphasis by the author). Day 5-31-56*

*Retreat Days: 28-29-30*

*Day I confessed: 5-30-56*

*Day I received the Daughter of Mary ribbon: 5-31-52.*

*Day of my First Communion: 12-8-46*

*Day I started the first nine Fridays of the month prayers: 1-1-56. I finished in September.*

*Day I started the first Saturdays of Our Lady prayers: 1-2-56. Day I finished: May 7<sup>th</sup>.*

*Offerings I made in the month of the "Heart of Jesus" in 1956.*

*DAY*

- 1. I will not waste any time fooling around in class and workshop.*
- 2. Today I will only drink water during the meals.*
- 9. Today I will do the spiritual Communion nine times.*
- 10. Will stop eating candy today.*
- 11. Today I will only drink water in the cafeteria.*
- 12. I will stay the whole mass with my hands in prayer and without looking back.*
- 13. When the bell rings I will softly say: "Jesus, I am going ", and stay quiet in my place.*
- 15. Today I will do the spiritual Communion nine times. (I did not).*
- 24. I will stay with my hands in prayer during the entire Holy Mass without looking back.*
- 27. I will offer today's Communion to those who are suffering. (I did not).*
- 29. When the bell rings I will softly say: "Jesus, I am going" and stay quiet in my place. (I did not remember to do so).*
- 30. Today I will do the spiritual Communion nine times.*

*On November 26th I had the pleasure to once again confess and open my heart to my spiritual father.*

*I made my confession, since the last time he was here, that is, at the retreat. I told him about the resolutions made at the retreat. My spiritual director told me to renew all resolutions, but with a change: instead of thinking about heaven and hell, think about death.*

*Offerings I made to Our Lady in the nine day prayers dedicated to Immaculate Conception (Year 1956)*

*- Visit Our Lord asking for the conversion of sinners.*

*On June 18, I had the immense pleasure of once again opening my heart to my spiritual father. I was very pleased.*

*Questions to ask my spiritual father when he comes:*

*How can we be happy in heaven if our mother is not there?*

*I would like to always love Jesus very much.*

*I received my Communion with a feeling of indifference when I did not want it to be this way”.*

## XI

### TWO LETTERS.

In a letter she wrote to us when we were studying in the Seminary in Jundiáí, Aída refers once more to the retreat preached by Dom Jaime.

*"June 3<sup>rd</sup>, 1956.*

*My dear brothers,*

*This is a great opportunity to send you this letter since Mom is going to visit you in São Paulo.*

*You must be wondering why I took so long to send my letter in answer to the one you sent me. But the fact is that only now I have been able to write you because many reasons prevented me from doing so before.*

*One reason was our Holy Retreat where D. Jaime de Barros Câmara preached to us. I mean Holy Retreat because that was what it really was. I can truly tell you that I have never attended a better retreat than this one when compared to the many others I have gone to before.*

*You cannot imagine how happy I was! His Eminence was delighted with us because we all made a very passionate retreat. By admirable planning from the Divine Providence, this retreat fitted perfectly between the festivity of the Holy Trinity and that of Corpus Christi. On the day of the festivity, His Eminence, in reward to our utmost good will and passion during the retreat, expressed his desire to celebrate the Holy Mass right here in our chapel. Upon entering the chapel, the choir sang the song "Ecce Sacerdos". During the Holy Mass, the Cardinal gave us an eloquent sermon about the Eucharist.*

*After the mass he showed us several paintings portraying Christ's life as he had promised he would do during our retreat. We offered him a beautiful hat with a parchment that had a printed image of a saint as well as a certain amount of money in order to celebrate a mass for the suffrage of his deceased mother's soul.*

*But I did not tell you the reason for my joy.*

*First, because I had a great retreat, as I mentioned before. I made my overall confession on the last day, which brought to my soul great joy and true peace.*

*For a long time, I had been praying to Jesus to give me a Spiritual Father in whom I could fully trust and who would guide me through my spiritual life. But in spite of my prayers, God seemed to me as if He were sleeping in a boat that is out in a storm, the same way it is portrayed in the Gospel. However, in this retreat, Jesus showed me that "He sleeps, but listens just as well as if He were awake". Then, He sent me Mr. Cardinal, whom I will call from this day on "My Spiritual Father".*

*I was prepared to ask him to be my Spiritual Mentor, but God was so good that even before asking him, His Eminence told me:*

*- "From now on I will be your spiritual guide, my daughter, since you called me father". You cannot imagine how pleased I was! Amazing how God is generous! So now I have a very honorable father to whom I deposit all my trust!*

*Pray as much as you can for me so that I can advance on my path of virtue and please, pray for my dear spiritual father as well.*

*I am sending through Mom a few more stamps that Sister Vigária gave me. Pray for her as well. I also want to ask you to get me a small printed image of Saint Francis of Assisi. By the way, I would actually like you to please send me a stack of these small printed images of Saint Francis, okay? Thank you.*

*I was going to send you that magazine I bought on my vacation when Roberto and I went downtown. But, unfortunately, it simply disappeared and I actually do not know how.*

*Brother, you have made so many mistakes in your English letter! I am going to correct a couple of them. For example: The correct way is "Thank God" and not "Grace to God". Another one is... never say "very thank". It is the biggest mistake you can make. The correct way is: "thank you very much". By no means get mad at me, because I'm doing this for your own good. So, send me another letter in English.*

*I think I have nothing else to tell you. Therefore, I want to send you all my love and say that I miss all of you very much.*

*Please do not forget to pray for your sister who loves you very much.*

*Aída”.*



With her mother at the “Campo de São Cristóvão” (Rio de Janeiro).

Rio de Janeiro, 13 de julho de 1954  
O' Mãe Imaculada, eu tua filha  
Para mostrar que desejo: Conhecer-te melhor  
Amar-te melhor  
Serrir-te melhor  
Para festejar com toda a terra tua  
Imaculada Conceição  
Para obter que teu  
Coração Imaculado  
reine sobre o mundo  
Para que a minha vida seja  
Util, Apostólica  
Para que conheça e siga minha  
Vocação  
Para que nunca pelo pecado renuncie ao teu amor  
Começo hoje o meu "Caderno Mariano"  
Com alegria e com amor, e enchê-lo-ei sob teu  
materno olhar  
Tua filha, para sempre  
Aída Luri

The first page of Aída's "Caderno Mariano" (Marian Notebook).

Translation (Aída's Marian Notebook).

Rio de Janeiro, July 13<sup>th</sup>, 1954

Oh Immaculate Mother, I your daughter  
To show you that I wish: To know you better  
To love you better  
To smile to you better  
To celebrate with all the Earth your  
Immaculate Conception  
To assure that your  
Immaculate Heart  
Reign over the world  
So that my life can be  
Useful, Apostolic  
So that I could know and follow my  
Vocation  
And so that I never renounce your love through sin  
Today, I begin my "Marian Notebook"  
With joy and love, and I will fill it completely under your  
maternal care  
Your daughter, forever  
Aída Curi



Seven days before her death, Aída wrote me her last letter. I was there at the Seminary in Jundiaí, in my second year of high school.

*"Rio, 7-6-58*

*Dear brother Maurício,*

*God be Praised!*

*For a long time I wanted to write you, but the lack of time is always the reason that prevents me from doing so. As you know, I am studying a lot. I am in the third year of English at the "Cultura Inglesa" school, in Copacabana. On Tuesdays, I have class from two to three p.m., and on Thursdays, from two to four p.m. I have a great teacher and I am making great progress in regard to this language that I personally think is wonderful. I also study Portuguese in Copacabana with one of my classmates who in turn also studies English. She is a very well educated lady. Finally, I am studying typewriting at the "Escola Remington" school, in the same neighborhood.*

*As you can see, I have very little free time. I only have the mornings when I am at Nelson's store. So, I have very little time to dedicate myself to writing letters. However, today being Sunday, I am at home studying for my English test which will be next Wednesday. And as such, I took a break from my studies, got my pen and decided to write you a few words.*

*We are doing well here, thank God, and most certainly it is due to the prayers of two seminarians who I know very well and do not get tired of praying to their loved ones.*

*And you? What is happening in your life? Have the June exams already started? I would like you to send me your grades as well as Waldir's. I, on the other hand, promise to send you mine after the exams.*

*I have some sad news to tell you. As you recall, Uncle José (dad's brother) was very sick at the time you were still living here. Well, after you left, he kept getting worse and worse until he was taken to the hospital where he unfortunately passed away last Sunday. What was very fortunate was that he was being well assisted by a priest who gave him the last rites and therefore, he was able to confess and receive communion.*

*While he was at the hospital, we went to visit him several times. He always asked insistently about both of you and said he wished to see you. He spoke a lot about Waldir. I ask you to please pray for him so that he may rest his soul. Remember he was our father's brother so pray for him as if he were our own father.*

*He once told me when he came here that "he was waiting to receive news about my engagement around July or August". But I think he was completely wrong because up to now, no "prince charming" has showed up.*

*Well Maurício, if I continue to write I will not finish studying this lesson that is somewhat difficult. So I want to give both of you my warmest hug and say that I miss all of you very much".*

*Your sister Aída.*



*Aída at downtown Rio.*



Aída and her three brothers (Maurício, Waldir, Roberto).



Aída's three seminarian brothers in Jundiaí – São Paulo.

## XII

### AN HONOR ROLE STUDENT.

In a letter sent to the attorney Dr. José Valladão with the purpose of being attached to the Aída's "dossier", Mother Superior Maria Casas from the "Educandário Gonçalves de Araújo", wrote:

"... since she was a little girl, she showed great purity of soul and a lot of compassion towards others. She also had a very lively intelligence and skills to perform any intellectual, manual or domestic work. She was always a student of exemplary conduct, winning, year after year, the most prestigious awards".

In fact, she got all the awards that the school usually awarded to the best students: The "Piano Course" was perhaps the one that gave her the greatest satisfaction.

To the girls who excelled themselves during the school term, the Institution granted them school vacation at home at the end of the year. This award Aída always won (and more than just once) and actually being the only one who enjoyed this privilege.

Sister Ignácia also pleased us with her testimony regarding Aída:

"Aída was an exceptionally studious girl and took her studies very seriously. On the eve of the exams, she took the time to explain the lessons to her classmates who were quite weak in their studies. After the age of 15, she became a true assistant to the teachers, helping them in their subject areas. *Aída was, for over a quarter of a century, the best student who had ever studied at the 'Educandário'.*"

When Mom wanted to take her out of the 'Educandário' so she would be able to attend a high school that was recognized and approved by the Government, the Sisters insistently asked Mom to let her stay because "she was a role model for the other girls". Aída ended up staying there until she turned eighteen.

"In class or in the workshop - says Dalila da Conceição Costa, her classmate - she stood out among everyone else because of her intelligence. Her embroidery seemed to have been made by fairy hands. When she sat at the piano, we stopped to hear her play".

She had a special fondness for the English Language.

Her classmate Marly Alves, who left the "Educandário" a year before Aída, received a letter from her. In this letter, she wrote about her deep sadness because the School administration had decided to suppress the English study. She wrote:

*"... You cannot imagine my sadness. Ah! Marly! I like the english language so much!"*

On vacation at home, she was always busy in some small practical useful chores applying what she had learned in school. She always carried a notebook that was full of recipes of cakes, sweets and candies. She also used to embroider and learned how to make dresses with Mom. She enjoyed classical music, but was also fond of popular tunes, particularly those in English, or the ones that were interpreted by Emilinha Borba, who was her favorite singer. Her favorite TV shows were ballet and theater.

At the "Educandário", the game she appreciated the most was volleyball, although she rarely practiced it. In this sport modality, she was an expert in the play called "belly slide" (when someone throws themselves towards the ball just before it hits the ground and ends up avoiding the opponent to score). This is why her classmates always picked her to be in their team.

During the school years, she studied many subjects like: shorthand, english and Spanish as well as dressmaking and culinary arts. By learning these skills, she knew she would be able to get good jobs that would help Mom – a goal she never lost sight of.

In a newspaper article about the "Educandário" entitled "From there they leave ready for happiness", published on August 15, 1953 in the "A Noite" newspaper from Rio de Janeiro, a photo showed Aída at the piano. She was at that time 13. The text read as follows:

“Aída Curi is the best student of the year. Her award was the possibility of learning piano. This year, and to date, Aída Curi is the most outstanding student. She exhibits a small ribbon on her chest. And every afternoon, she goes up to the cabin where the instruments are and if the reader would pass by and hear repeated parts of Schubert or Gounod, most certainly it is her studying with her young steady fingers, carrying her purse and wearing a white apron.

She is preparing herself for life and particularly, for the Art world”.

Beautiful wordings about Aída were sent to us that were left in the book of memories that belonged to a classmate:

"Miriam, please do not forget your classmate who spent many years at your side. When you are at the piano playing a waltz by Strauss or a serenade by Schubert, always remember me. I leave you my warmest embrace from whom will never forget you" (12/27/1955).

She always had a deep sense of gratitude towards the nuns and promised she would bring them her first salary as soon as she earned it. The last time she visited them was on Mother's Day in May. She said the following to Mother Superior:

- I did not come here today to offer you my first paycheck, but to kindly embrace each and every Sister on Mother's Day because I consider all of you my second mothers.

Her letters written in Spanish and English.

Rio 6-5-57.

Querido hermano mio.

My dear brother. Hasta ahora estuve esperando una cartita tuya y todavía no he recibido ninguna. Por eso tengo a escribirte algunas palabritas, y desta vez en la preciosa lengua castellana, que como sabes, estoy estudiando. Sé que no será una cartita perfecta, pero servirá para mostrarte mis pequeños progresos en dicha lengua. Sé la carta que escribiste a mamá, en la cual me pedías para enviarte sellos. Tengo algunos que los envío junto con esta carta. Cuando tenga más te los mandaré.

Only now I can express my affection for you. Certainly you can understand it to you. But I explain it to you. I have an English letter before. I have much to study. This letter before. Had you? Are your already done your progress? I am waiting for you. Study English well in our come.

Como estás en los estudios? Estoy estudiando mucho este año, que como sabes, es el último que paso en el colegio, y quiero prepararme bien para tener una buena educación, y así ayudar a nuestra querida mamá. Solo faltan ocho meses y es muy poco, no es verdad? Recibi una cartita de Waldir y ahora que se aniversario está próximo le escribiré una carta felicitándole.

I have a sad man Jose (Chile's) died last Sunday. I mean for his soul. My time is very short. I ask you not to leave. Rememberances to all the family.

Rio, 4-23-57. Nearly a situation of affection you I do not want to let you go. You have always given me not forgetting me. So, it's same proof of friendship.

As you know I was very tired at home. I walked very far. I like to assist pictures and what they spoke in.

me about. Whatever will I liked it. I heard many words. (translating into the) about Emilinha and interested much but.

**Educandário Gonçalves de Araujo**

**DEPARTAMENTO FEMININO**

**CONDUTA MENSAL DA**

Educanda AÍDA CURI

Aplicação em aula:

Dactilografia..... 10

Taquigrafia..... 10

Inglês..... 10

Curso de religião 10

Artes aplicadas.. 10

Corte e costura... 10

Aproveitamento em oficina 10

Conduta geral..... 10

Rio de Janeiro, 15 de Maio 1957

*[Signature]*  
Diretor

**SIGNIFICAÇÃO DAS CLASSIFICAÇÕES**

0, péssima; 3, md; 5, regular; 7, boa; 10, ótima.

**Obs.:** A reatência durante 6 meses, na classificação "péssima" será motivo suficiente, para exclusão do Estabelecimento.

**Educandário Gonçalves de Araujo**

**DEPARTAMENTO FEMININO**

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Aída's last semester at the "Educandário".



## XIII

### THE TESTIMONIAL FROM A CLASSMATE.

At school, Aída had a very close friendship with Elenira Pereira dos Santos who was her classmate. She started at the “Educandário” the same year as Aída did. They both became best of friends forever. Even after leaving the “Educandário”,

Elenira sought to continue their friendship by meeting occasionally with Aída and exchanging points of view regarding new experiences. They would talk about many things and recall the time they spent in school and how Elenira still listened to her advices. Through sincere friendship and intensive contact between them, that continued until the eve of Aída’s tragedy, Elenira’s testimonial is worth mentioning:



"I knew Aída heartily because she was my confidant. I admired her very much and I knew she would never be capable of the slightest gesture of levity.

Often she advised me about the dangers that existed outside school. I remember that once, I made some comments about boys and got the following remark from her:

*- Be careful, Elenira. Do not believe in boys' sweet talks. Show yourself indifferent and do not express any affection towards them, because each and every one of them has his slyish tricks..."*

Aída always asked Our Lady to keep her absolutely pure. She even had a beautiful prayer that she gave to me. I still have the copy until today. I perfectly remember the day she shied away from a group because they had lowered the level of

the conversation. I also recall the occasion when she tried, through skillful astuteness, to make us turn our eyes away from disreputable posters.

Aída was a pure and sweet girl that was beloved by everyone around her. She was the Sisters little darling and they admired her very much.

When I had a problem with math, I always looked for her. Regarding any other problem, she always knew the best possible way to solve them and thus, gave me a sense of relief and comfort.

As to the boarding school rules, at first, I was a bit defiant and Aída always gave me advice. The Sisters always pointed to her as a role model to be followed. They said: "Follow Aída's example". We frequently found her in the chapel praying alone. She asked me several times to keep her company. It was not rare to see Aída ending up being the only one who was receiving the Holy Communion during the week. She was a true example of a lovely person".

When she was asked about a possible "flirt" in Aída's life, Elenira did not hesitate to flatly deny the fact. In a letter dated September 11, 2004, Elenira placed her conviction on the exemplary behavior of her best friend on record. This is the text of her letter:

“The Rev. Monsignor Maurício Curi,

In response to your question about the epistolary correspondence between us, I declare the following: until one day before the tragic death of your sister Aída, I used to see and talk to her at your brother Nelson's store (at 45 Carioca Street) at least twice or three times a week every time I left the shorthand course at “Cinelândia” neighborhood. There was also one epistolary correspondence that I wrote to her in shorthand and it was when I was visiting some relatives in Sao Paulo and stayed there a couple of days. *I must say that Aída never told me if she had already dated or even had a simple "flirt" with someone.* The reference to boys in these letters never really meant anything serious, either on my part or on hers. I am declaring this in order to clarify and at the same time answer your question as to references made about boys that were mentioned in this epistolary correspondence. Respectfully. Elenira Santos de A. Campos”.

To me, this letter seems to be of extreme importance because for countless times her virtue was put into question. The basic reason was because her address book contained names and phone numbers of some boys she had probably met at the English school or while riding the bus when coming or going to school or home. It would be a rash judgment to assume anything less than noble because as a pure-hearted young lady, her conversations were always well intentioned, meaning that her thoughts were entirely directed to God and to doing good to other people. She had a committed focus both on her study and the work that she performed so well at her brother's store. *We could ask these same people, whose names are on her agenda, if they would sincerely give us their testimonials.* I have no doubt that their statements regarding my sister would most definitely be honorable and dignified, placing even greater emphasis on her charming and candid personality.

## XIV

### EXCERPTS FROM MARÍLIA ALVARENGA'S INTERVIEW, AÍDA'S CLASSMATE AT THE "EDUCANDÁRIO", GRANTED TO AÍDA'S BROTHER THROUGH FACEBOOK IN JANUARY 2012.



**Marília Alvarenga**: She loved to sing so she became part of the choir of the “Candelária” Church. She sang every Sunday at the noon mass and was always the second voice.

She also sang in the mass at the “Educandário” chapel and it was normally a priest from the “São Cristóvão” Church who celebrated the mass.

At the “Candelária” Church, I cannot quite recall who it was, but I believe it was Archbishop Dom Hélder Câmara who sometimes celebrated mass there. Sometimes, Cardinal Dom Jaime de Barros Câmara also celebrated the mass at the church.

**Maurício**: This priest, who was called Fajardo, was Spanish and wrote a letter about Aída for the lawsuit. The other one who was also Spanish, once told me that one day he was giving communion to the girls and cannot explain how the host whirled out of his hand and went straight to Aída. He only made the connection to the fact when he

heard about Aída's heroic death. He admired her so much that he thought that Cardinal Dom Jaime should trigger the process of canonization. I spoke to the Cardinal about this Spanish priest's desire but the Cardinal, who was known for his admirable prudence, did not comment on the subject.

**Marília Alvarenga**: Sometimes she was crying when she went to sleep. In our prayers before going to bed, she always prayed for her darling brothers. Aída never sent to sleep without saying her prayers.

Aída's bed was the first one while mine was the second one in line, near the bathroom.

Once, we had a small argument because of the window. She had closed it because she was extremely scared of bats and I was dying due to the heat. In all true honesty, bats did in fact get into the bedroom.



**The Educandário Gonçalves de Araújo bedroom where Aída slept.**

I never saw Aída raise her voice even once to any of us. She was always a very sweet person.

Sometimes, I would apologize when we had these discussions, but she always remained silent, and I really felt ashamed of myself.

Did you know that every single one of us had a number? Aída's number was 90 and mine was 104.

At the school gate entrance, there was a frame that had all the names of the best students and Aída was always first. She had a ribbon shaped as a little red bow that she carried on her chest. This ribbon was only given to the best students and Aída always wore one. She was a great role model for all students to follow because she always got the highest grades.

Aída was: very well mannered, gentle, devoted and loving, in other words, the finest qualities a human being could have. When a student answered impolitely to the Sisters, she would immediately reprimand her classmate but never in an unmannered way. She never answered back to the Sisters. She would always receive any sort of admonition with her head lowered.

Aída was really special. She always went on retreats, made communion on a daily basis and always confessed. One of the things that she did not like too much was to take part in some play. But she really liked to watch a good movie and there was a movie theater inside the "Educandário". She never missed a single movie and only those students who got good grades could watch the movie. Aída was one of those students.

A month before her murder, she came by to visit us. We even commented on the sadness that was carved on her face. It seemed as though she was already feeling something strange was going to happen.

She had absolutely no freckles! Generally people who have red hair have freckles on their face. On the other hand, she had very white skin.

Aída loved to jump rope. During recess, she was either sitting on the patio bench reading a book or jumping rope. She used to say: "Marília, let's jump rope so we can grow".

She said she descended from Syrians. Because of her hair color, we nicknamed her "siriazinha" (little Syrian).

One day in the garden, I picked some figs and carrots to eat at night. Aída hearing the noise asked me: “Are you eating something?” To which I answered “Yes”. “But where did you get them?” And I replied to her saying I had picked them from the garden and she said she was going to complain to Sister Laura. So I told her: go right ahead! Knock on her door and ask Sister Laura if she wants a bite! Aída laughed a lot.

One morning, Aída woke me up saying she couldn't sleep. I asked her if she was feeling anything wrong and she said she was okay. She said she had a dream and I thought she had dreamed about a bat. So I told her that the window was closed to what she said it had nothing to do with that. She told me she had dreamed about many angels that were all around her and were very hungry so she went to the pantry and gave them food. When they finished eating, they asked for dessert. She told them that she didn't have the key of the dessert pantry so she asked the Sister in charge for the key. The Sister said she could not give it because the other classmates would get jealous so the angels began to cry and she ended up washing the dishes they dirtied. She told me that there were many angels and I asked her how many. She said there were a total of **14** and we stayed a long time talking about dreams until we finally fell asleep again.

**Maurício**: Just for conversation sake, without any scientific basis about dreams, I would see the angels as being God's creatures and whom she most admired. On a daily basis, she used to recite the “Prayer of the Angels” with Marília Alvarenga before going to bed: “Holy Angel of the Lord, my zealous keeper, since you entrusted me with divine compassion, I ask you to always save me...”. And regarding the number **14** (the number of angels in the dream), I'd say it was precisely on July **14**, 1958 that the angels came to take her to definitely be with them around the Holy Trinity.

**Marília Alvarenga**: Do you know which color Aída liked the most? Blue. She said that the color blue was the color of the robe used by Our Lady of Graces.



## XV

### OMEN.

Sister Oliveira, in a letter to our family, tells us about a curious fact:

"When, in a certain morning in July 1958, I had news of what had happened to Aída, I was totally devastated... Shortly after, I reflected on one of her little secrets. It was in October 1957 at the last months of high school and only three or four students were attending shorthand class because it was Confession day.

I noticed that Aída was concerned with something when I was giving them speed dictation. When I finished, I asked her what was worrying or saddening her... if by any chance she was already thinking about the job she would soon have to get... She smiled and said with a distant look in her eyes, as if she were seeing far:

*- I am not sad... I am just thinking... thinking that I am not going to live long...  
Something tells me I am going to die soon...*

- But why? Are you sick?

*- No, but I think I am not going to live long...*

She smiled again and stopped. I did not want to ask her further questions and decided not to take her words too seriously".

A similar fact is also narrated by her teacher Lúcia Cerne Guimarães Corona. She tells us that, on the eve of her departure to Europe on a vacation trip - weeks before Aída's death - she gave her teacher a beautiful embroidered handkerchief.

Mrs. Corona jokingly thanked her, saying:



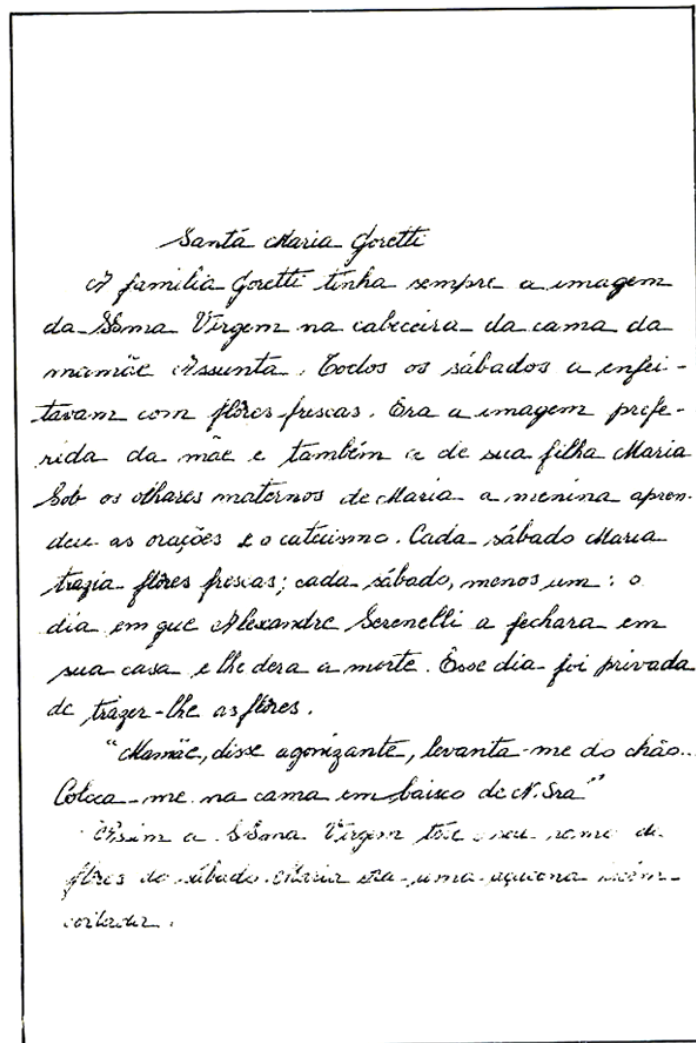
- This handkerchief is to wipe the tears of yearning that I will feel for being far away from my classmates and students!... In October, I will be back to hug each and every one of you!

- *The future belongs to God...!* - Aída said.

- You are very pessimistic - answered her teacher - you are still so very young! You have a lot to live for! If anyone is going to pass over to the other side, it would probably be me because I have lived much longer than you...

Aída smiled and became thoughtful, listening to a song.

While still in Europe, Mrs. Corona received the news of her student's death.



The page of her notebook where she talks about Maria Goretti.

Translation.

Saint Maria Goretti

The Goretti family always had the image of the Holy Virgin on the headboard of mother Assunta. Every Saturday they adorned it with fresh flowers. It was the image preferred by both the mother and her daughter Maria. Under the maternal look of Mary, the girl learned the prayers and catechism. Every Saturday Maria brought fresh flowers; every Saturday except one: the day that Alexander Serenelli locked her at home and killed her. That day she was not able to bring her flowers.

"Mommy - she said dying - lift me off the ground... put me in bed right under Our Lady".

This way the Holy Virgin had her bouquet of flowers from Saturday. Maria was a freshly cut white lily.

## XVI

### MARIA GORETTI, MARTYR OF PURITY.

(1890-1902)



Maria Goretti lived in the Italian village of Ferrieri di Conca, ten kilometers from the town of Nettuno (Italy). One day she found herself attacked by Alexandre Serenelli, a young man at the age of twenty who worked for the Goretti family. Taken by violent passion for the young girl who was only twelve years old, Alexandre tried to dishonor her. Maria resisted by fighting fiercely.

Alexandre ordered her for the last time:

- Submit or die!

And the little hero replied:

- I would rather die than sin!<sup>(3)</sup>

Furious, Alexandre stabbed that innocent little body 14 times.

---

<sup>(3)</sup> These same words were written by Aída in her diary two years before her death (see Chapter X).

Before she died, this little martyr girl forgave her murderer. Later, her mother, by the name of Assunta Goretti, would do the same. Many years after the crime, Alexandre went to Corinaldo where the victim's mother lived and begged for her forgiveness. And Mrs. Goretti replied:

- How could I not forgive you if she has already forgiven you?

The next day, Christmas Eve, they received communion together. During the canonical process, Alexandre told the ecclesiastical authorities the whole truth. After having expiated his crime in prison, Alexandre became an employee at the Convent of the Capuchin Fathers of Ascoli in Piceno (Italy), where he worked as a doorman and gardener until his death.

It is worth mentioning Mrs. Goretti's reaction: "My daughter's death was painful and of extreme commotion to me. However, I would have suffered much more if she had submitted".

On July 6<sup>th</sup>, 1902, Maria Goretti became a martyr. In 1950, she was canonized by Pope Pius XII and became a Catholic Church saint.



The author, in Italy, in front of the house where Maria Goretti was martyred.

## XVII

### **SHE KNEW MARIA GORETTI...**

Ever since Aída watched the movie “Lily of the Marshes”, which describes the story of the Italian saint Maria Goretti, she became her biggest admirer. She elected her to be her patroness, as her classmates attest, and always kept a picture of the little martyr inside her closet. Maria da Glória Souza, who was a classmate, remembered very well when Aída lent her the book about the life of the little Italian saint in the last year they were together in the “Educandário”. Even after having graduated from school, Aída continued this devotion at home. She had a picture of Maria Goretti on her nightstand until the day of her death.



On the bedside table, the picture of Saint Maria Goretti.

Below is also a statement from our aunt.

Rio, 10-22-1977.

My dear nephew Maurício,

Through your mother Jamila, I became aware of your interest to collect all the available facts related to your sister's life. As such, I would like to share with everyone one of the conversations she had with me on an occasion she spent with her uncle José, my husband, here at our home. I could see the great devotion that Aída had for the young martyr girl from Italy, Saint Maria Goretti. She once told me that, if one day her financial conditions were good, she would make a little chapel dedicated to this little saint for whom she had a profound veneration, and would offer this great gift to the "Educandário" because of the education and kind treatment she was receiving from the Sisters, teachers and employees all the time.

Because she liked the Sisters so much, she would imitate them by playing games with the neighborhood kids. She used to gather them and pretend she was a teacher, always being demanding but at the same time sweet, depending, of course, on the behavior of her little students.

I hope, Maurício, that this brings you some comfort. Please accept my warmest embraces. Your Aunt, Eliza Curi.

## XVIII

### **“...I WOULD DO THE SAME!”**

There is a valuable testimonial from Aída's classmate Maria da Gloria Souza. She recalled that, after seeing the movie that was exhibited in school about the martyrdom of the saint, both commented on the bravery of the little Italian girl. She still recalled from that conversation, Aída's spontaneous words:

*- ... I would do the same! I would never embarrass my family! Our purity is the greatest wealth we possess. If a similar thing happened to me, I would die but would not let anyone touch me! I think God always gives us the strength to fight! Otherwise, how would it be possible for Maria Goretti to fight in such a manner?!*

## XIX

### **“I WOULD RATHER DIE!”**

By Terezinha Maria do Carmo (Aída's classmate):

"We were commenting about a practical exercise that Monsignor Magalhães had performed with us in regard to Maria Goretti (he often talked about this saint) when my classmates turned to me and asked me what would my reaction be if something similar, that happened to Maria Goretti, would happen to me. I replied that, maybe, I would not react the same way because physical pain simply creeps me out. A stab! God forbid! Then Aída, staring straight at me with her penetrating look (a look that I continue to see until today), exclaimed:

*- Oh! Terezinha! You know you would never surrender...never!... With the moral education we have received, you would never surrender!...*

We went to English class and Aída headed towards the chapel. I asked her later where she had been and she, with her angelical manner, blushed and said:

*- I was praying for you...!*

At that time I was about 17 and she must have been about 12”.

Mrs. Maria Antonia, the school's cook, sometimes told Aída cases of girls who had been unlucky or had fallen into a trap by misguided young men. Aída - remembered Mrs. Maria Antonia - used to manifest herself this way: - How unfortunate...! *I would have preferred to die!...*



Aída with her brother Roberto in “Cinelândia”  
(a neighborhood in Rio de Janeiro).





Strolling about with her brother Roberto – Carnival - February 1958.

Querida M: da glória  
Ofereço-lhe esta fotografia como  
recordação minha. Vendo-me  
assim vestida, certamente pensa-  
rão que fui uma "foliãzinha"  
neste carnaval. Mas assim não  
foi. Só passei, mas não brin-  
quei. Estou acompanhada de  
meu irmão Roberto. Foi tira-  
da lá na Cinelândia.  
Com todo o afeto desta tua  
amiga saudosa Aída Curi

Com 19-2-58

Dear Maria da Gloria,

I offer you my picture as a souvenir.  
Seeing me dressed like that, one certainly  
may think I was a "carnival reveler". But  
that was not the case. I only strolled  
around, but did not dance. I am  
accompanied by my brother Roberto. It  
was taken at "Cinelândia".

With all the love from your friend that  
misses you.

Aída Curi  
on 02.19.58

## XX

### A WHOLE HEART.

**This was written by Aída:**

*"If I were married, I would look more to the moral and religious qualities of my suitor than to his external appearance. And I would give him my whole, undivided heart".*

## XXI

### THE STUDENT FROM THE "CULTURA INGLESA" SCHOOL.

Noteworthy is Francisco Melado's testimonial, a guy who met Aída at the "Cultura Inglesa" English school in Copacabana. It is a testimonial on Aída's value outside the "Educandário" in her last months of life. The present letter shows that she kept all her moral and spiritual strength even after leaving the Sisters.

"Rio, October 31<sup>st</sup>, 1959

Mrs. Jamila,

I met your daughter while studying at the "Cultura Inglesa" English school and it seems as if I still see her sweet child's face exhibiting the innocence of her heart and the joy of her Christian soul. I admired your daughter Aída for the moral virtues she clearly possessed with no ostentation. The warmth of her religious training could be felt without having the aspect as if it were a "sermon" for those who were less religious. I knew her plans for the future where she had the fair ambition to find a very good job. This was why she was studying English at the "Cultura Inglesa" English school as well as preparing herself, with an intense focused studies, for the public civil examination. She was a girl who wanted to succeed only with the help of God and her own efforts.

For all these reasons, Mrs. Jamila, I admired her and considered her my friend. Your daughter was pure sweetness in person, a perfection in her manners and truly virtuous where very few young people are.

If I am writing you this letter, it is because I wish to reaffirm the unforgettable moral conduct your daughter had. She was a beautiful lady and very elegant but moreover, she had a radiant soul.

With my utmost respect

*Francisco A. Melado”.*

## **XXII**

**"NO!"**

**“I’M NOT GOING!”**

The letter reveals Aída’s innocence...from the beginning

Rio de Janeiro, June 11<sup>th</sup>, 1976

Dear Father Mauricio Curi,

I am writing this letter to inform you what I know about the case related to your sister Aída Curi.

I heard from a good friend that I have known for many years and who is a very good hearted person with high moral integrity as well as a true Catholic that frequently receives communion, the following fact:

This lady was passing by in front of the “Rio Nobre” building the night that the tragic murder of your sister occurred and saw the moment when two boys denied giving something back, that was in their hands, to a young lady to what she supposed was her wallet or purse. The girl demanded them to give the object back to her with the following words: - "Give it back to me!" and one of the boys answered: "No!", "I am

not going to!" She insisted: "Give it to me now!" (the argument was something like that). And the boys insisted with the jest: - "I will give it back to you, if you come here and take it away from me!".

One of the boys was closer to the elevator and the other one closer to the girl. This lady told me that the girl was very pretty.

As they approached the elevator, one of them opened the door and got in, while the other one forced her, at first, just slightly to get inside. The first one, however, who was already inside the elevator, grabbed the girl's hand and finally pulled her in. She strongly struggled trying to break free and run away. Nothing worked.

The elevator door closed and this lady was not able to see anything anymore. She thought at first that they were just kidding around. Due to the girl's personal attire and behavior, she was able to distinguish that she was a decent, well-behaved girl and could not suspect the boys' ulterior motives. Only after, I mean, after seeing her dead on the street and recognizing her as being the same girl who was reluctantly fighting them, refusing with all her strength to be in their company, she had the urge to scream in anguished pain.

This lady lived very near the building where the crime happened.

This is what I heard from a friend of mine.

I am the mother of a family, a true Catholic that frequently receives communion and I belong to a religious association.

My daughter wrote this letter that I dictated to her because my eyesight is a little weak.

Graciously

*Maria do Céu Rodrigues*

*287 Visconde de Pirajá Street, apt. 501, Ipanema District – Rio de Janeiro.*

The same fact that was reported in Mrs. Maria do Céu Rodrigues' letter was also mentioned by Mrs. Flora dos Santos Moreira in a letter she addressed to me. Mrs. Moreira was the assistant principal of the "Escola Moreira" School where we, Aída's brothers, began our primary studies. Mrs. Moreira became a great friend of our family.

Although other words were used and the version somewhat different in details, her letter reveals substantially the same act of violence that forced Aída into the building.

Mrs. Moreira was in the company of my mother on the day of the defendants' judgment. When they were leaving the court, a lady approached both my mother and Mrs. Moreira and said she had been following the case from the beginning and wanted to reveal to them something she had heard days after the crime. She said she was a close friend of a lady who in turn had a friend who lived in the adjacent building and saw everything that happened since the beginning. Mrs. Moreira told us the following: "The lady who spoke to us said that this witness was in fact looking through her window and saw the girl insisting that the boy return her glasses and therefore, started paying closer attention to what was happening. They lingered a while in this - "give me my glasses back!" and the boy - "come and get it", then the girl said - "Come on! I want to go home!" and the boy was stepping back more and more and answered - "Here! Come and get it! It's here! Come here"! Seeing that the girl ran to get her glasses from him, she thought it was all over. A couple of days later, she wanted to tell the police but her husband did not allow her to do so because he did not want any sort of complication. Your mother, Jamila, is aware of all this. Today, I found out that this lady really existed and because of her fear, she decided not to talk".

Flora dos Santos Moreira

In fact, the building that is located to the right of the "Rio Nobre" building where the crime occurred, has a facade that forms a small curve outward, thus allowing whoever was at the window of the neighboring building to easily see what was happening and even hear everything. Thinking about this scene is where our mother came to the following conclusion: "Aída said to her colleague from typing class who was calling her: "Wait! I am only going to go when he gives me back my purse". Inside the purse was everything, even the bus fare to get home. At that exact moment, the doorman was already holding the door of the elevator open and the two guys quickly took her inside the elevator!" (This is from her personal notes).

## XXIII

### **SHE WAS FORCED TO GO UP AND SHE WAS SCREAMING.**

#### **Other Witnesses.**

In one of our mother's notes, specifically in a page handwritten by her, she talks about 3 more witnesses to the same fact:

"A gentleman was passing by in his car, and saw when two boys were forcing a girl into the building. The girl who told me was this gentleman's niece. Her name was Esther and her mother's name was Eliza. They both lived at 459 Rua Voluntários da Pátria Street, apt. 701 in Rio de Janeiro. They later moved to the city of São Paulo.

I also heard a lady say that *she heard screams in the elevator*, but did not come forward because her husband threatened to leave her if she ever talked about it to anyone. This lady had no children, but cried a lot when she spoke about the fact.

I still remember that, when I got there and saw Aída's body on the sidewalk, a lady dressed in black that seemed to be a maid, said: "I heard the girl crying".



The Author with his mother on the day of his first Mass in Brazil that was held at the “Escola Moreira” School, Riachuelo District, in 1966.



## XXIV

### WHO WAS AÍDA?



Aída's mother, accompanied by the family lawyer Dr. Jose Valladão, on a visit to Cardinal Dom Jaime.

#### People who knew Aída gave their testimonials.

The late Cardinal Dom Jaime de Barros Câmara, then Archbishop of Rio de Janeiro, sent a testimonial letter to Dr. José Valladão (the family lawyer). In this letter, besides expressing his conviction of Aída's innocence, the cardinal reveals her deep desire of becoming a nun. I quote:

"In attention to your personal request on last Saturday's audience at "Palácio São Joaquim" (São Joaquim Palace), I would like to declare what I know and am able to talk about Aída Curi.

I would rather, however, refer to her life and not her death that occurred when I was in Rome.

I had no intention of manifesting myself on the subject, although I have my beliefs about the victim's innocence.

Since, however, you are asking me to clarify a few things concerning Aída Curi, I claim to have known her innerly, in terms of spiritual direction, in regard to the last year she spent at the "Educandário Gonçalves de Araújo", where I preached at the retreats to students more than once.

Aída Curi wanted to enter the "Convento das Servas de Maria" (Housemaids of Mary's Convent), in the district of Jacarepaguá, Rio de Janeiro. She only delayed the execution of her plan because she wanted to work first, in benefit of her mother, whose sacrifices Aída wanted to relieve in gratitude and sincere tenderness. Respecting her freedom, as was my duty, I agreed to the postponement on her religious vocation.

Based on this intimate knowledge of her beautiful soul, I believe that this young lady was caught by surprise regarding the unfortunate fact that ended her earthly existence".

When Mrs. Lucia Corona heard the news of the death of her private student and classmate from the "Cultura Inglesa" English school, she was touring through Europe. Mrs. Corona suffered such an extreme shock that she left the Magisterium to devote herself exclusively in becoming an Educational Advisor. Therefore, she immediately signed up to take this course after her student's death and finally became an Educational Advisor at the "Colégio Pedro II" school, in the city of Rio de Janeiro. Here is the letter that she sent to our mother:

"Amsterdam, 5<sup>th</sup> of October, 1958.

My dear Lady,

I just received a letter from Rio, where my husband has told me about the sorrowful event regarding Aída's death.

Even though I did not know her that long, maybe something around four or five months, having been with each other more frequently at the "Cultura Inglesa" English school, where we were classmates and later she became my Portuguese private student, made me admire your daughter in such a way that I began to cite her as a young role

model for today's youth.

Smart and beautiful, she never showed herself as being vain. She devoted herself in each class with an enthusiasm and diligence I have never seen in young people at her age.

Simple and dedicated, she won me over and her classmates at the "Cultura Inglesa" English school as well. I was very happy because I was able to appreciate, admire and esteem her even more.

My trip to Europe separated me from my classmates and, at the same time, students, and now I am sorry to have left them, because if I were there, this fact would never have happened.

I regret not having known you better before my departure.

Aída always talked to me about the desire she had for us to know each other. Unfortunately, my duties and preparation for the trip prevented this from happening. In October, when I finally arrive in Rio, I would like to meet with you.

As her classmate and friend, I am truly sorry to see her life, so pure, terminated so suddenly and that, all her effort as well as confidence in the future, simply vanish.

And to think that she was so well-intentioned in her life plans! I always told her: "Aída, you are a miracle of a girl!". She smiled modestly, almost apologizing for the way she was.

I know she is in Heaven wearing her virgin martyr crown and looking compassionately over us. It is hard to accept the fact that she was only 18!

In Brussels, the priest who accompanied us celebrated a mass in her intention.

Two days before my departure, I received a beautiful handkerchief that Aída had given me as a gift. I will keep it forever! I am trying to spare it from my tears.

Once again, please accept my heartbreaking embrace from who today feels honored to have been your daughter's teacher.

*Lúcia Cerne Guimarães Corona*”.

This teacher’s testimonial is perhaps the most accurate one that has ever come to our hands. This was truly the best testimonial because it was from someone who interacted directly with Aída, almost on a daily basis, until June 15<sup>th</sup>, only one month before her murder.

Still in other opportunities, Mrs. Corona expressed her thoughts about Aída:

"I met her with her girlish ways, her naive conversation, her smooth steps, her pure, really pure smile! I interacted with her for four straight months.

I remember her today as if I could still see her in my study-room, as a Portuguese student, with her copper color hair loose over her shoulders, elegant, bent over her books, trying to decipher, tenaciously, “Camões” thinking in certain verses of “Lusíadas” (“The Lusiad”). I remember her unfolding the "reduced clauses”, becoming delighted and extremely happy when she was able to find the appropriate conjunctions and the exact sense in the wording “*desenvolvida correspondente*”. I still remember her as my classmate at the “Cultura Inglesa” English classes, wanting to translate idioms into correct forms that conform to our language. And it was always how she showed herself to my eyes...surprisingly smart and diligent. And this was my true admiration as well as my surprise seeing her in all her splendor at the age of eighteen, simple, modest, pure and so beautiful, to the point that I told her once: - Aída, you are truly a miracle girl!”

Mother Eusebia Garmendia who had been, for many years, mother Superior of the “Educandário” and was in Barcelona when the crime happened wrote the following letter:

"Barcelona, 12-8-1959

My good and dear Mrs. Curi,

Congratulations!!!

Yes, Congratulations! It’s because you have the happiness of being the mother of a martyr... I have no doubt about it... Aída was a true role model as a student and will

continue to be for all the young girls of my unforgettable Brazil. This miserable world did not deserve to have a wight like her. So, God took her away to be with Him after demonstrating to all of us the way He helps by giving the necessary courage in order to trigger the heroism to overcome difficulties and achieve the fulfillment of noble ideals. I feel fortunate to have interacted with your so warm-hearted daughter... my angelical and dedicated Aída Curi!

A friendly embrace from

*Mother E. Garmêndia”.*

We also received the testimonial from Father Florentino Garcia, from the Order of the Recollects of St. Augustine, who was, for some time, in charge of the chaplaincy of the “Educandário Gonçalves de Araújo”. He entrusted us with his testimonial, which is summarized in these words written below his name:

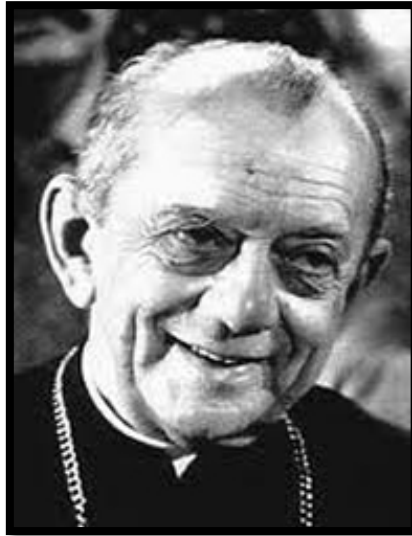
"... At the time, he was in charge of the Chaplaincy of the “Educandário Gonçalves de Araújo”, where he attended and administered the Holy Communion and saw signs of God’s-Jesus Christ’s delight in that soul of divine predilection”.

I asked him one day about these “signs of God’s - Jesus Christ’s delight” which he referred to and Father Florentino replied that he preferred to be discreet with regard to this particular subject.



Sister Inácia, Aída's teacher, spoke to the "Diário da Noite" reporter (August 4, 1958) as to the meaning of her student's death: "It comforts us to think that, earning the crown of martyrdom, our little Aída has also reached Glory. May her example be meditated by parents and others responsible for the fate of the young generation and the beginning of a new era".

**“A SISTER OF MARIA GORETTI.”**



D. Hélder Câmara.

Right in the middle of Copacabana, a sister of Maria Goretti emerges. (D. Hélder Câmara)

"I am deeply moved to think that in our city, in Copacabana, in our century, in our current days, a sister of Maria Goretti" has emerged – said His Excellency Dom Hélder Câmara, who was at that time the Auxiliary Bishop of Rio de Janeiro.

The Press asked him the following question:

"Is it right or wrong, absurd or appropriate, to approach Aída Curi's name to that of Maria Goretti?"

"It seems to me - Dom Hélder said - for the reasons I will present next, quite possible to approach the two names.

It is not, of course, the case of proclaiming the identity of the two personalities, the two lives and two deaths... Let alone to proclaim Aída's holiness, when everyone knows that the canonization process is private and entirely up to the Holy See. Even if we assume that, in the case of the Brazilian student, there have been imprudent acts (and to what extent they may have existed is not easy to ascertain... it is easy to accuse those

who can no longer defend themselves), is indisputable and will undoubtedly become evidently clear that she did not hesitate to lose her life (or in Christian language... to win it!) in order to defend her virtue”.

Dom Hélder would also provide an analysis of what happened, in social terms:

"Once again it is proven that young criminals are a result of both extreme poverty and super comfort (...) they are victims of a panorama that we helped to create, or did not actually help to modify. All traumas on Aída's body (or the martyr's body, we can say) reveal the result of sexual saturation and super saturation to which both childhood and youth of major cities are progressing. If the painful acknowledgment of Aída's death serves to open everyone's eyes that is, we as the responsible people, then may we bless this young martyr's sacrifice”.

On the day that the Month's Mass for Aída's soul was celebrated at the “Educandário”, the group of singers that Aída was part of, sang (like a prayer) the song she liked the most. It was sung (prayed) like this:

In the night so dark / of the deceiving world,  
No other light guides me / but my God who is love.  
My soul so wishes / that the divine sun sees,  
In the eternal radiance, / that Jesus is my love.

After the Mass, Aída's “Marian Notebook” was shown to the public. It was and continues to be a precious collection of data and writings about Virgin Mary. Afterwards, her classmates read the following message:

- "Aída! You departed from this world too soon and left us many memories. We are melancholic, touched with the news of your death. When we were notified about the incident, we were stunned, because we could expect anything to happen, except this. You left this school only seven months ago where you studied for twelve years. You were innocent, simple, you did not know evil. You expected to find happiness by your Mommy's side. You were an angel of candor... a lily of purity. They were not able to steal your purity. They did not mar the whiteness of the lily that now thrives in the garden of Heaven. This comforts us in the midst of sadness that invades our souls. You were a true martyr... a great heroine... a second Maria Goretti. You must already have received the palm of martyrdom. Aída, ask God to protect your classmates who are still in the “Educandário” preparing themselves for the struggles of life”.

Mrs. Flora Santos Moreira, who was always by my mother's side in the most



painful moments as well as on Aída's side, reaffirming her innocence, whenever necessary, left us her testimonial:

"I was the principal of the school where Aída's brothers studied. I came into contact with Aída every time she went there to spend her vacations that were granted to her at the end of the year. Already a young lady, just days before her death, she made me a visit, giving me the opportunity to appreciate, as always, her candor, her innocence and almost angelical purity".

The Vicar of Gávea, Father Sérgio Sampaio, made the following statement:

"Knowing about a movement in favor of Aída Curi and wishing to cooperate to ensure a fair concept about her life, I come to declare the following:

1 - Aída Curi was first introduced to me at the "Matriz da Gávea" (Gávea Mother Church), by one of her brothers after Sunday Mass. Being an honest and pious family, with two sons as candidates to the Priesthood, I had the impression of a well educated young lady.

2 - This impression was reinforced when seeing her every Sunday at Mass and taking communion. She was a Daughter of Mary from the "Educandário Gonçalves de Araújo", and she did not transfer herself to the "Paróquia da Gávea" (Gávea Parish) because she was afraid that, studying and working hard, she would not be able to fulfill all the commitments required from a Daughter of Mary.

I make these statements as Vicar of the "Nossa Senhora da Conceição da Gávea" (Our Lady of the Conception Parish of Gavea), where the family Curi lives, still suffering from the pain, but comforted by the certainty that they gave Brazil a Maria Goretti, a Martyr of Purity.

Rio de Janeiro, July 14, 1959 (the first anniversary of Aída Curi's death)".

Aída's story has already been published in Portugal. A passionist priest, Father Faustino de S. Domingos, included her in a book entitled "Lírios no Charco" (Lilies in the Swamp) or "Santa Maria Goretti e suas Imitadoras" (Saint Maria Goretti and her Imitators) (Typography Editorial Franciscana – Braga. 1969).

In Lebanon, a summary of her life and her death was published by Father Georges Fakhoury, in the Melkite Catholic magazine "Al Maçarrat".

Her name is immortalized as a street in Jacarepaguá (Taquara) in Rio de Janeiro.

"As a tribute from the city in memory of Aída Curi, mayor Sá Freire Alvim officially signed a decree giving the former street called "Projetada" the name of Aída Curi. This street begins at Beriguara road and ends at Jacarepaguá".

("O Jornal", Rio, 2-17-59).

In Brazil, there are two other streets that have her name: one in Bahia (in the city of Ipirá) and the other in São Gonçalo (in the city of Niterói).

## XXV

### **"I KNEW HER SOUL VERY WELL."**

(Testimonial of "FREI (Father) JAIME FAJARDO",

Chaplain of the "Educandário Gonçalves de Araújo" and Aída's Teacher.)

Rio de Janeiro, December 28<sup>th</sup>, 1959

The Honorable Attorney Dr. José Valladão,

Dear Dr. Valladão,

What moves me to write to you is my overwhelming desire of doing something for the good reputation of Aída Curi, whom I really knew well.

As Chaplain and Teacher at the "Educandário Gonçalves de Araújo", I was in continuous contact with this martyr girl, a martyr of purity of soul and body, who became known throughout Brazil and, as I personally witnessed in Spain and Argentina, overseas as well.

It is sad to observe how difficult it is for some people to accept the fact that a girl can actually be virtuous and pure as well as have a clean heart and body. Aída was

really a pure, chaste and virtuous lady; a true model for today's youth. This is not literature; it is the faithful expression of the truth.

I met Aída in 1952. What caught my attention was her delicate way of acting with her classmates. Afterwards, commenting on the girl's attitudes with the Sisters of the "Educandário" Community, I heard from them that Aída was, undoubtedly, the best student of that school. Always observing Aída's behavior very closely, the good concept that I already had of her grew even greater. Having the priest as a friend and counselor, the girl began to ask spiritual and moral questions, exposing her way of thinking and acting. Always sincere and accurate on her statements, she surprised everyone with her spiritual maturity. She hid nothing, always expressing her strong desire to know and follow the virtuous path. She achieved, in an ongoing struggle, the true virtue, always keeping her spirit taut in order to improve and advance on the path of goodness.

I knew her soul very well and I can say, without any fear of contradiction, that she was an elite soul. This wonderful girl's virtue I have in the highest concept. I have never met anyone like her or better than her. Considering her life and martyrdom, I think she is a true saint and I commend to her my difficulties, struggles and success of my ministry, praying every day, as I would pray to St. Maria Goretti, her heroic sister in purity, or to any other saint. I know I am not the only one who is an Aída devotee. There are many others.

I take this opportunity to say to you Dr. Valladão that, when Aída's death occurred, I was in Spain. I spoke to Aída for the last time in April 1958, shortly before the consummation of the fact. In April, I ended up going to Europe. Aída was the same pure and righteous girl; a true saint who was always concerned with her studies. Could she have fundamentally changed her behavior in such a short period of time until the day of her death? No! Never!

Dr. Valladão, as a foreigner, I am not able to express myself on everything that I feel and know. In my language however, it would have been different.

Wishing to always be useful to you, I declare myself as being the appropriate server.

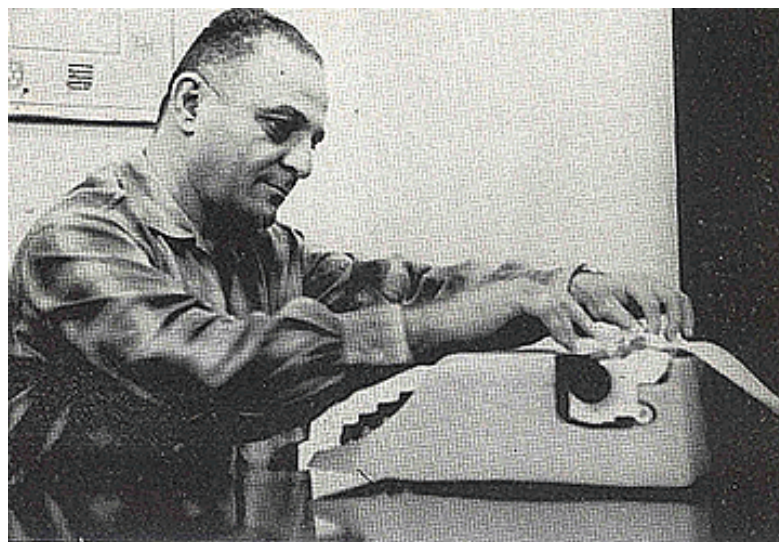
Father Jaime Fajardo - PS of Ag R. (Provincial Secretary of the Augustinian Recollects of Brazil) and Chaplain of the "Educandário Gonçalves de Araújo".

 <p>★ 15-12-39 † 14-7-58</p> <p>"QUERO FAZER UM SACRIFÍCIO TODOS OS DIAS... FAREI MINHAS CONFISSÕES COMO SE FÔRA A ÚLTIMA DE MINHA VIDA... ESTOU MUITO CONTENTE PORQUE JESUS ESTÁ EM MEU CORAÇÃO E A MINHA ALMA ESTÁ PURA... PROCURAREI PENSAR TODOS OS DIAS NO CÉU, NA MORTE E NO INFERNO".</p> <p>"MARIA, AJUDA-ME A AMAR SEMPRE A JESUS E ANTES MORRER DO QUE PECAR".</p> <p>(DOS APONTAMENTOS DA FALECIDA AÍDA).</p>	<h2>AIDA CURI</h2> <p>NASCEU EM 15 DE DEZEMBRO DE 1939 EM BELO HORIZONTE, ESTADO DE MINAS GERAIS, INTERNOU-SE AOS 6 ANOS NO EDUCANDÁRIO GONÇALVES DE ARAÚJO, DIRIGIDO PELAS ABNEGADAS IRMÃS FILHAS DE SÃO JOSÉ. DESDE O SEU PRIMEIRO ANO SOBRESSAIU-EE DE SUAS COLEGAS COMO A MELHOR ALUNA.</p> <p>A NOTA 10 ACOMPANHOU-A DURANTE SEUS 12 ANOS DE CCLÉGIO. ERA QUERIDA E AMADA POR TÓDAS AS IRMÃS E COLEGAS QUE NÃO CESAVAM DE TECER ELOGIOS À SUA ALUNA-MODÉLO.</p> <p>EIS QUE NA FLÔR DE SUA IDADE: 18 ANOS, DEUS ESCOLHEU-A PARA DAR UM EXEMPLO CABAL PELA NOSSA JUVENTUDE, PREFERINDO A MORTE À DESHONRA.</p> <p>SENHOR, RECEBEI AS NOSSAS PRECES PELA ALMA DE VOSSA SERVA "AIDA". PARA QUE CCUPE UM LUGAR NO SEU REINO E GLORIFICADA GOZE DE PERPÉTUA ALEGRIA.</p> <p>★</p> <p>SANCTA VIRGO VIRGINUM, ORA PRO NOBIS.</p>
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Remembrance of the Seventh-day Mass.



Aída's mother at the tomb with her son Maurício.



David Nasser, the journalist who defended Aída's virtue.



The coffin being carried by classmates from the “Educandário”.  
On the right, Flora dos Santos Moreira, teacher and assistant-principal of the “Escola  
Moreira” School.



On the left, Monsignor Elias Coueter (later to be Bishop of the Melkite Catholics )  
and on the right, Monsignor Elias Jarawan.



Aída's four brothers, Nelson, Roberto, Maurice and Waldir, on the seventh-day mass at the Melkite Catholic church of São Basílio, in Rio.



Seventh-day Mass - on the left, Aída's mother, immediately after is Aída's mother's stepmother, Mrs. Filomena Jacob, and Mrs. Alice Santos Moreira, principal of the "Escola Moreira" School, where Aída's brothers studied.



Aída's mother, and to her right is Mrs. Badia Curi, her husband's cousin.  
On her left, her stepmother Mrs. Filomena Jacob.

## XXVII

### **“I WAS A CLASSMATE AND AÍDA’S TEACHER.”**

### **“I HAVE NEVER SEEN SUCH A PURE AND INTELLIGENT GIRL LIKE AÍDA CURI.”**

(LÚCIA CERNE GUIMARÃES CORONA, both the Educational Advisor of the  
State and at the “Pedro II” school.)

(Newspaper Article by VICTOR MARIANO - "Diário da Noite" Newspaper – Rio, 3-  
31-1959.)

Two valuable statements were published by the press last week. One of them, by  
the Mother Superior of the “Educandário Gonçalves de Araújo”, Sister Maria Casas.  
The other one by the Cardinal - Dom Jaime de Barros Câmara - both confirming the



great character of the girl that was lured to the trap inside the “Rio Nobre” building.

However, something was missing to all this. Both Dom Jaime and Sister Maria Casas referred to Aída Curi as still being a student of the boarding school run by Sisters. Nothing, however, not a line or a word, on the young lady’s behavior in the period in which, having finished her course, she returned to the company of her mother. It is worth saying that, of the six months that Aída lived away from her school, between January and July 1958, little is really known about her behavior outside her home when she was away from her relatives’ sight.

How would Aída have really behaved on those occasions?

Would she have continued being pure, honorable and decent as she was during the twelve years she spent at the “Educandário” school?

However, providing for the existing gap, we are going to publish, at this exact moment, what Mrs. Lúcia Cerne Guimarães Corona (a professor at the National Technical School and Portuguese teacher in the business course that operates at night at the “Escola Argentina” school) told us. She graduated in Pedagogy and Journalism by the “Faculdade Nacional de Filosofia” (National College of Philosophy) and is the author of valuable works related to education. This well-known educator is the most proficient person to talk about Aída Curi, for having been her teacher at the exact period when the young girl was studying at the “Sociedade Brasileira de Cultura Inglesa” English school.

Mrs. Lucia Corona interacted with Aída almost on a daily basis - and intimately - in her last six months of life.

### ***MRS. LUCIA CORONA MEETS AÍDA CURI.***

- I met Aída Curi - this is the educator reporting the fact - in January 1958, at the “Cultura Inglesa” English school. Although there was a relatively big difference in age, we were classmates, because I was there for an improvement course and she was there to learn English. By recommendation of one of her teachers, Aída approached me and asked if I could give her private Portuguese classes because she intended to enroll in an

official civil examination in order to get a public employment. Until June 15<sup>th</sup>, she was the person with whom I interacted with almost on a daily basis. We left the “Cultura Inglesa” English school together and walked all the way to my house.

On the second half of June, I traveled to Europe. I was all packed ready to go to the next city which was London when my husband wrote to me about Aída’s death.

I arrived in London already suffering such a great commotion and shock that, for a whole day, I had a tremendous fever that reached forty degrees Celsius. And ever since I returned to Rio, I have not been able to fully recover from the shock I suffered, to the point that I suspended all my private classes at home, because I was not able to look at the small room where I used to give her Portuguese classes.

### ***SHE WAS A PURE GIRL.***

- If you interacted intimately with the girl between January and June 1958 then you are able to give your opinion on her character. True?

- Absolutely. I would go further: I can honestly tell you that I have never met a girl like Aída. Her character was pure, with a candor that moved me in our conversations. Most of the time she talked about her mother, telling me all the struggles and sufferings Mrs. Jamila had in order to educate her children. As a student, she was a role model in everything. She never missed a class and never arrived late to any of her classes.

I was her friend and teacher. She was undoubtedly a discreet, quiet and modest young lady in her manners and the way she spoke. Her intelligence was above the ordinary. Modest, yes. And it is so true that I only knew she had the highest grades at the “Cultura Inglesa” English school when her teacher told me.

Nowadays, the southern side of the city offers countless dangers for young ladies who are as pure as Aída Curi. I, who heard her speaking over the phone with her classmates from the “Educandário Gonçalves de Araújo” and, as to what I was able to witness in a short period of time regarding her undoubtedly flawless moral, confess that I actually started to get worried. Aída was a fair skin, tall young lady, with beautiful auburn hair... very pretty.

If she had any flaws, it was precisely her beauty, if this can be said this way. We used to come to my house together, walking and talking. She called everyone's attention. But, and this is important... she did not realize the interest she aroused in others. I told her many times to be careful. She invited me to go to her home and meet her mother. Aída studied at more than one school and therefore, had no time to have lunch. Here at home with me, when we finished the Portuguese class, we had milk and cookies. I did not let her leave on an empty stomach. Her day-to-day routine was controlled by the clock. Do you think that I, being a teacher for almost twenty years, dealing with several hundred students from every social class of every level of education, would make a mistake? Aída was a very decent person as well as mindful of her own personality.

### ***SHE DID NOT KNOW HOW TO DANCE.***

- Did you know if she had any boyfriend?

- No. In conversation with her friends from the “Educandário Gonçalves de Araújo” school, they asked her if she had many candidates as possible grooms-to-be. Aída laughed and said that, if and when someone showed up, she would tell them. She avoided going to family parties because, as she told me, she did not know how to dance. There was not even a simple and innocent date in her life.

### ***A HANDKERCHIEF AND A PICTURE.***

She then showed us, at this point, a handkerchief and a picture.

- See this handkerchief? Aída gave it to me on the eve of my departure to Europe.

She told me on that occasion: *"When you begin to miss me and start crying, use this handkerchief to dry your tears"*. She hardly knew she was being prophetic, because her words were unfortunately fulfilled. And this little picture... Look! It is her! Placid countenance, placid beauty... Beauty of a saint, you know?

### *AN ANGEL OR A SAINT.*

- After Aída Curi's graduation, no one, besides her mother, interacted more with her than me. I admired her for her qualities like intelligence, manners, virtue and balance. Nothing was lacking for her to have, in life, a happy future. Aída was either an angel or a saint. I have never seen a girl like her!



Mrs. Lúcia Cerne Guimarães Corona, Aída's teacher, talks about her knowledge of the victim to reporters. Aída's brother, Waldir, and her maternal uncle, Jorge Jacob, can be seen in the background.

## **XXVIII.**

### **Dreams and Thoughts of my daughter Aída Curi.**



Jamila Jacob Curi, Aída's mother.

### **October 11<sup>th</sup>, 1958.**

The first dream I had related to my daughter was on the night the Portuguese teacher, Mrs. Lucia Cerne Corona and her husband, visited me. They gave me an image of Our Lady of Fatima as a gift to comfort me and give me strength to withstand the tremendous shock I had suffered. On that exact night, I dreamed that Aída was alive and by my side. I was sensationally happy and saying to everyone that I knew: "My little girl is back. She came back to stay with her Mommy and comfort me". In this dream she was an 8 year old child and she was really smiling and playing ball. I started to say out loud: "Aída, let's go!" At that very instant, she transformed herself into a beautiful young lady and I was so grateful because God had given my daughter back to me. But unfortunately, it was just a dream. Had it been true, it would have been incredibly unbelievable!

### **October 12<sup>th</sup>, 1958.**

What I am going to narrate was just a thought. In this thought, I decided to go to the cemetery. When I arrived there there was a crowd of people. I told them: Please wait! She will come! People wanted to get closer to the grave but I insisted that they stand still where they were because she would come. The lid of the coffin began to slowly open and she stepped out and came walking straight toward me with a serious expression on her face. She did not look at anyone. I went beside her to the gate and called a cab. We went directly home. When we arrived there, she was extremely tired and went to lie down in bed. Then, I went to the window because the crowd outside wanted to talk to Aída. I raised my hands as in prayer and said to all of them: “For God's sake! Please do not make any noise! She will see all of you who are soliciting her attention tomorrow. It was as if I was actually seeing it happen because I honestly wanted her to come back to me.

### **October 15<sup>th</sup>, 1958.**

I dreamed that I had walked into a bus looking for my daughter. I asked the driver if he had seen a girl passing by him. He lowered his head and pointed to Aída who was lying on the floor. He told me that, if she did not give in to the demands of the evil men, she would have to die of hunger right there. Next to her, I was able to see a black man as well as two other white men. I looked at my daughter and she turned her eyes towards me but was not able to say anything. She was very sad. I wanted to do something, but I just could not. I stood there unable to say anything. And then suddenly, it was all gone.

### **June, 1959.**

I went to sleep. I closed my eyes and that was when I distinctly saw Aída dressed in a sky blue dress and with her fiery color hair. She was pleased... very happy. I soon opened my eyes and saw nothing more. Everything seemed as if it were a fairy tale.

### **Still in June, 1959.**

What I wanted to say on television but was not given the opportunity to do so, was this: to say that everything was all over for me as well as for Aída. Everything ended for both of us. Who lost her forever was me, her Mommy, whom she wanted so dearly. What I wanted to say to everyone was that, now, I will never be able to ask Aída for anything anymore. I would actually like to ask mothers from the State of Minas Gerais (Aída was born in the State of Minas Gerais at 436 Santos Dumont Avenue in the city of Belo Horizonte) as well as mothers from all over Brazil, to take very good care of their young daughters. Always demand help and life assurance for them as well as unlimited protection from authorities so that this barbaric crime that my daughter suffered, will never happen to anyone again. Take good care of your daughters because I am going through an endless sullen pain. Mothers... you can actually say you are happy because you have your daughters by your sides. You are able to give them advice, warning them against evil and human wickedness...

### **November 9<sup>th</sup>, 1960.**

Wednesday: my daughter Aída... I dreamed about you today. I dreamed that I had gone to the cemetery to pay you a visit. When I arrived there, they were already putting the coffins away. I complained to them saying that I wanted to pay a visit to my daughter Aída. The girl who was taking care of the place felt deep pity. She told me to go see the casket being opened. And you, who was my dear baby, the light of my eyes, looked at me, laughed and then began to cry. You kissed my hands and said: "Mommy, your hands are cold!" I told you smiling: "you are wrong, my child. It's your hands that are cold!". And suddenly it was over. It was just a dream. If it were true, it would have undoubtedly been sublime. Let God's will be done!

### **August 13<sup>th</sup>, 1962.**

My son Maurício gave me the news on his way to Jerusalem where he would continue his studies for the next four years. At first, I was sad because I would be parted from my son, but since he was thrilled, I was as well. That night I closed my eyes. I was

thinking excessively and feeling extremely sad, and saw my daughter's face looking at me as if to say: "do not be sad, Mommy. I am by your side". That is how life is... nobody belongs to anybody. If we could understand this entirely, no one would suffer. This is all God's will!

### **May 24<sup>th</sup>, 1964.**

Today, I was watching television and feeling very lonely. I started crying. I remembered you so much my dear daughter Aída! If you were here close to Mommy, I would hug and kiss you many, many times! We would exchange ideas saying: "this is good and this does not fit..." We would talk about many plans for your future! How everything would be so beautiful... so lovely. You were a wonderful flower. Your small but so pure and clean heart was like a white lily without any spots, because you were pure, my darling! You were the light of my eyes! If longing for someone could kill them, then I would be long gone. However, God relieves our hearts in such a way that we do not entirely understand. It's all for the love of God and the most holy Mary.

### **August/27<sup>th</sup>/1969.**

I heard the "Diário de um Repórter" (Diary of a Reporter). It was Wednesday. The emotion was immense. I wanted to cry but not a tear rolled down my cheeks. Thank you David Nasser, for having recalled my daughter's case once again. David Nasser said everything there was to say! He simply got tired of just talking about it and now has nothing more to say. He risked his own life. God bless you, David Nasser!

### **December/4<sup>th</sup>/1969.**

It was a rainy day. The landlord's granddaughter came to deliver the receipt of payment. She rang the bell. When I opened the door she looked at me with her eyes full of charm and said: "Grandpa sent me to deliver this receipt. "I thought I was seeing Aída. And I could not help myself. I began to cry and then I had to stop because I could not continue crying anymore. I felt a lump in my throat. I had to drink some water to stop crying. I cannot stay home anymore! It makes me remember my daughter so much. I really miss her because she was a role model as a daughter! She had no flaws!



**June/22<sup>nd</sup>/1972, Thursday, 2:20 p.m.**

Sister Francisca from the “Educandário Gonçalves de Araújo” where Aída studied, passed by Roberto’s store. She came in, saw me and said she wanted to pay me a little visit. Sister Francisca made me remember Aída so much. I wanted to cry out loud and shout, but I had to restrain myself, pretending to be strong. Sister Francisca told me that a student was ill because she had leukemia, and the doctor did not give her another day of life. Sister Francisca said that she started praying to Aída to help the girl’s mother because she was really far away and would not probably be able to be near her daughter. This was practically impossible because not only did she live far away, but had no money to come. Suddenly, the mother received a telegram and the very next day she was able to be near her daughter. Until today Sister Francisca has no doubt that it was a grace received from Aída. She said she has been receiving many graces from Aída. Everything that Sister Francisca has asked her for, she has received.

**June/24<sup>th</sup>/1972, Saturday.**

Who knows how to cure the longing? Longing is bitter and sullen. It is pain and sadness. Today, at the store, I really missed my daughter. I tried to hold myself back so not to cry, but today I could not bear it any longer. I cried and cried. Why do the culprits hide the truth? Can they actually bear so much remorse within them? Fourteen years have gone by. The doorman is obviously being protected. I would like to tell the person who is protecting him: “Make the doorman surrender!” Please... take this weight off his conscience! My son, Father Mauricio, is preparing the third publication of Aída’s book, “A Jovem Heroína de Copacabana” (The Young Heroine of Copacabana). We wanted a multitude of truths to be included in this book, but we decided to exclusively talk about Aída’s life. Everything is in God’s hands. I am sure of one thing: my daughter’s case... Aída... will still have many twists and turns. God wants accountabilities to be very serious.

### **April/28<sup>th</sup>/70.**

I dreamed about Aída, my daughter, who was so happy! I hugged and kissed her so much while I was crying. However, I did not want her to notice that I was crying so not to make her sad. Whenever I dream about the only daughter I had makes me long for her. How sad! It was just a dream! Please God, make me understand! Help me please! I want Aída to be near me so badly!

### **December 9<sup>th</sup>, 1972.**

It was the day when I called Sister Superior at the “Educandário” asking her what day they were going to have their party. A Novice Sister replied that it would be on December 10<sup>th</sup>. I cried a lot on the phone and told her that maybe I was not going to attend because I would not have the courage... She, the Novice Sister, consoled me saying: “Mrs. Jamila, your daughter is in Heaven. Please do not cry”. I thanked her and hung up. In a few minutes the phone rang. I answered it and Mother Superior began to talk to me: “Mrs. Jamila”, she told me, “I can send you a special invitation for you to come. It would be a great honor to have you here with us”. I thanked her and said that maybe I would not go because I would not be able to bear so many memories that would make me suffer a lot. I cried and it seemed that, the three individuals who mistreated my daughter, had given me a beating because my entire body was aching. Completely tired, I did not dare to go. I actually wanted to go, but I could not. I spent all day in sadness and Nelson, my son, noticed my situation and told me: “I do not know what you are feeling today but you look extremely tired”.

### **December 15<sup>th</sup>, 1972.**

Friday, it's a beautiful sunny day. Aída Curi, my daughter, you would have turned 33 (the age of Christ).

Neide Borges Curi, my daughter-in-law, attended a mass for Aída's soul because of a grace she received.

### **January 7<sup>th</sup>, 1973.**

I dreamed about Aída. I dreamed that all believers were inside the church “Nossa Senhora do Paraíso” (Our Lady of Heaven), in São Paulo. Suddenly, Aída appeared dressed all in white near the altar. As soon as the people saw her, they quickly went toward her. I shouted: “Wait! It is not like that! Wait a minute!” And just in that moment, this beautiful dream ended. My love! My life! How I miss you! I think about you so much. Why don’t the culprits tell the truth?

### **September 26<sup>th</sup>, 1975.**

I spent an entire Sunday with my son Father Maurício in São Paulo in September 1975. We went out and visited some girls from the “Focolares” Movement. Mauricio told them: “I wish my mother would give her forgiveness as I have given mine from the bottom of my heart”. I replied: “I will someday, when I feel that it is the right moment”. That same day I traveled to Rio. At home, talking to my son Waldir about it, he said: “are you not going to give your forgiveness”? I replied: “just saying it and not really feeling it in your heart, has no value. I then went to open Roberto’s store. On the bus, I asked God with all my faith that He touch my heart and help me to forgive. That afternoon, it was three fifteen, I was drinking coffee when suddenly I felt my heart being touched. I wanted to explain it better to everyone so they could understand me, when I shuddered and said: it is forgiveness! So, in that very instant, I gave them my forgiveness. It's all for the love of God. I know that now, God is all right with me. I asked for God’s help and He heard me. The forgiveness that I have given is to be given by all my children as well.

### **August 19<sup>th</sup>.**

I closed my eyes but I was not sleeping. I suddenly saw with my own eyes, the eyes of my darling daughter Aída looking at me with all her sweetness and tenderness. It seemed she was feeling sorry for me. I turned my eyes to the other side but her stare was always following me. Now she appeared to me but with only half of her face but continued to look at me tenderly. Shortly afterwards, I distinctly saw the image of Jesus

but only half of his body, and with a dearing benevolence, he looked at me. He took a little while to disappear. It was so beautiful that there were no words that could describe the vision I had. And around his face there was a radiant light that I have never seen before. I really liked it a lot! Thank you, God! Thank you very, very much.



Aída's mother in extreme desolation, petrified and disfigured by grief after seeing her sweet precious daughter dead on the sidewalk of Atlântica Avenue. She is being assisted by a nurse who is a friend of the family.

She was the most precious pearl of my life.

She was an absolute charm

She was an absolute love

She was beautiful

She was beautiful in her body and soul

This I can say and affirm.

I feel so alone

Without her love,  
I miss her tenderness,  
And how I suffer from her absence!  
My pain is quite sullen.  
All three were found guilty.  
She kept asking them: Let me go!  
I am a virgin!  
But they beat her even more and said:  
“You have to submit!”  
The fight was fierce,  
But the glory that many speak about...  
She preferred that they push her body off from way up high  
Than tarnish her name as a young lady.  
I pray that all mothers understand me when I say:  
“The most beautiful pearl I had, I lost!”

***JAMILA JACOB CURI***

**XXIX**  
**THE FORGIVENESS.**



Aída's mother receiving Communion from the hands of her son, on the day of his ordination in the city of Saidnaya (Syria), on August 29<sup>th</sup>, 1965.

Reading this book will be disappointing for those who expected to find in it either a detailed report of the crime that, in 1958, shocked the Brazilian Society, or moreover, a documentary on the Lawsuit, that was the object of headlines throughout all the national press.

My only goal was to present the admirable, undefiled figure of my sister.

Concerning the Crime and Lawsuit, I am considering these chapters definitely closed as of today.

And to all those who have been involved in Aída's death, in one way or another, and to their families who have suffered so much throughout this case, I would like to

leave a heartfelt evangelical Christian appeal at this moment by repeating the same words that were written in the fourth publication of this book in 1975. It was the Holy Year, Year of Atonement and Reconciliation. At that time, I invited everyone to take an important step together and go beyond everything that has already happened and wipe it all out, as if with a cleaning sponge. May it be an unconditional reconciliation, placing all of us in the dimension of God's mercy, the same way Jesus asks us to do so in the Gospel:

"Be merciful, just as your Father is merciful".

October 1975.



Jamila Jacob Curi, Aída's mother.

**XXX**

### **A MOTHER'S FORGIVENESS.**

"Happy are those who You have called and chosen to dwell in Thy courts, O Lord. Hallelujah!"

This "Communion Song" of the Byzantine Rite touched me deeply on the day I celebrated the Requiem Mass for my mother. I really felt that the people who were attending the Mass were actively participating and that it was more like a "paradise" rather than a death atmosphere. On December 2<sup>nd</sup>, 1977, at the age of 68, as a result of a

stroke, Mom journeyed to Eternity.

The “Irmãs da Visitação de São Paulo” (Visitation Sisters of São Paulo) sent me this meaningful message a few days later:

"She passed from the transience of time to Eternal Life... She is now part of God's heart as well as part of the Communion of Saints, and how splendid! That virgin martyr, glorious and immortal called Aída, came to meet her and received her maternal love... "

God wanted to grant Mom an outstanding grace, something that is humanly quite difficult. Forgiveness is really divine! Just over two years before she died (it was the Holy Year of 1975), she sent me a letter from Rio (I was in São Paulo) where she forgave everyone who was involved in Aída's death.

Rio, 9-29<sup>th</sup>-1975

My dearest son Maurício,

What you wanted so much finally happened: forgiveness!

Forgiveness to the murderers and all those who contributed to my daughter's death! I begged God so much, with all my faith and from the bottom of my heart, to give me strength and courage to be able to sincerely forgive. I felt something strange that is very hard to explain. First a sharp twinge in my heart. Right after, I felt something strange in my body that emotionally moved me and I started to cry. It was as if I was asleep and, with that twinge in my heart, I awakened. I cried so much because I was able to feel the forgiveness you so desired me to give flowing out of me.

I am so touched that I actually cannot explain how it happened. It was with sublime faith that I begged God to give me the strength to forgive. Now I truly know what a miracle is. It is a wonderful thing! I know I am in peace with God. He heard me. When forgiveness comes from the bottom of one's heart, there is no explanation.

I wanted the whole world to know about Aída's purity. I have this right. But it no longer matters. I have truly forgiven.

Many hugs and kisses from your mother

*Jamila Jacob Curi*



And in her diary, dated September 26<sup>th</sup>, 1975, I found this page entitled "A Mother's Forgiveness":

Day 9-26<sup>th</sup>-1975, Friday. When I came by bus to open the store, it was 7:30 a.m. I asked God to make me feel the will to forgive my daughter's murderers. God's miracle happened. Now I know what it is to feel your heart being touched especially when we have asked with all true faith. This is what all of humanity should have: a strong faith in life.

It was three fifteen, September 26<sup>th</sup> 1975, a coldish day with a forecast of probable rain. I felt my heart being touched. It was a strange feeling. I said spontaneously: Forgiveness! And shortly thereafter, it was as if a soul, a spirit untied itself from inside me. And I said: It's time for me to forgive my daughter's murderers. I felt such a great emotion! I really cried a lot.

Father Mauricio Curi, my son, always told me: I wish you would grant your forgiveness, because I have already given mine from the bottom of my heart. After 17 years and two months since Aída's death, I felt being touched and therefore I forgave.

With the forgiveness from all my children  
Signed

*Jamila Jacob Curi*

Her forgiveness is not limited to this heroic attitude reported here. Our mother continued to pray for one of the individuals who was involved in the crime as well as to his mother. Readers can assess her nobility and her sense as a mother who truly suffered a lot but, only through support by a divine force, knew how to go beyond her own pain...!

***"It was in the Third Order Hospital when I was ill. Only God will understand my pure true words.***

***October 27<sup>th</sup>-28<sup>th</sup>, 1976.***

***The Sister, as usual, came to give us the communion host. I begged, from the bottom of my heart, to forgive R. because he has already suffered a lot and his dear mommy is suffering even more. Again, I say this from the bottom of my heart. These***

*are words of a mother's feeling, who has already suffered a lot and deeply feels the pain of R's mother. May God forgive him. Jamila Jacob Curi".*

Reflecting upon my mother's sublime gesture, I remembered the famous saying of a Pagan, Liborius, St. John Chrysostom's master, an Orient saint who died in 438 a.d. Referring to the mother of this Father and Doctor of the Church, he addressed the audience before him, praising her with these words:

- "What respectable ladies exist among Christians!"



Mrs. Jamila is being comforted by Mrs. Flora dos Santos Moreira who was the Principal of the school where the boys studied.



The journalist David Nasser visits Aída's mother.



Young girls at Aída's age give their condolences to Mrs. Jamila at the seventh-day mass.



Aída's mother with her daughter's teachers.



Mrs. Jamila visits her daughter's grave.

**XXXI**  
**TO MY SISTER.**

Aída! You who are enjoying the delights in heaven  
And now sees us in the world still suffering,  
For those whom you left, please ask God  
For the glory that you have achieved suffering.

You were an untouched and beautiful flower,  
Full of freshness and eternal glow.  
You from the world penetrate this screen  
To be an example to the sinful world.

The world your innocence contemplated,  
Saw you be born in pureness and die in pureness,  
The virgin giving her blood to the God she loved,  
And made you the martyrdom deserve.

The virtue you cultivated since childhood.  
In your hands you had the vessel of innocence,  
And you cared for it fondly  
To deliver to God a clear conscience.

Why did you go so far away  
And in such a tragic way, so sad?  
Maybe in eternal Heaven then you thought  
And with martyrdom you opened its door.

Why did you go away so early  
Without enjoying the pleasure of living?  
It's because you glimpsed the Being that the soul begs for,  
August gift after your suffering.

Why did you not enjoy the vain ventures  
Of this world in your path?...  
It is because you went to meet in the skies above  
The eternal Goodness, happiness and glory.

It was on a night of struggles and martyrdom  
That your frail body rolled in the airs;  
As in the wind where the lily falls from the stem  
You fell undefiled in the avenue.

Death to you was an aurora  
That erupted from the blackest darkness.  
Copacabana until today cries  
The thud heard in sad loneliness.

Aída! From the golden throne of beauty  
Where you are sitting beside the Bridegroom,  
Send a rain of lilies of purity  
That you continuously receive from Christ, your Beloved.

Your beautiful and pure soul flew to heaven,  
The sufferings you took as beaten;  
You triumphed with glories and applauses,  
By seeking death, you found Life!

Innocent and unfortunate lamb,  
You escaped the only stall,  
Sword of lilies and roses  
Temple of melodies and of thousand arias.

And one day, through sacrifice,  
You returned to the original homeland  
Where only there a propitious spot can be seen  
To feel yourself at home... at last!

*Monsignor Maurício Curi*

*Rio - 1959*

- Poetry published in the 1st publication of this book – “Edições Paulinas 1959 São Paulo (Capital)”.

**XXXI**  
**APPENDIX.**

Foreword by Cardinal Dom Jaime de Barros Câmara (deceased)  
for the first publication of “Edições Paulinas S.P.”



Havendo examinado os originaes dos  
traços biográficos da virtuosa e heróica  
donzela Aida Cúri, declaramos nada ali en-  
contrar que, por parte da Igreja, obste à  
sua publicação.

*Jaime Cardinal Câmara*  
Arcebispo do Rio de Janeiro

Rio de Janeiro, 26 - VII - 1959



Translation.

Having reviewed the original copies of the biographical traits of the virtuous and heroic maiden Aída Curi, we so declare that nothing was found that, from the Church's behalf, precludes its publication.

Archbishop of Rio de Janeiro.

Rio de Janeiro, VII - 26 - 1959

Presentation for the 3rd publication by His Eminence  
the Cardinal Dom Eugênio de Araújo Sales.



Arcebispo de São Sebastião  
do Rio de Janeiro  
Guanabara - Brasil

APRESENTAÇÃO PARA A 3a. EDIÇÃO  
DO LIVRO DE "AIDA CURTI"

A primeira edição do Livro "AIDA CURTI" teve de D. Jaime de Barros Câmara uma carta a título de prefácio.

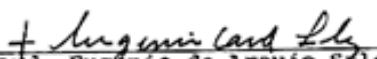
Hoje, para terceira edição dessa obra, seu autor pede ao atual Arcebispo do Rio de Janeiro uma apresentação.

Em um mundo eivado de erotismo, todo exemplo de luta pela virtude e pela pureza merece destaque especial. O Pe. Maurício Curti alinha uma série de argumentos em favor de sua irmã na defesa de sua virgindade. A leitura, portanto, é útil e mostra o caminho do Bem.

Sem qualquer intuito de julgamento, é reconfortante constatar, de um lado a veneração fraterna, demonstrada pelo irmão sacerdote, e de outro, uma vida em que os valores morais gozam de merecido relevo. Alguém pode discordar de uma ou outra interpretação na tragédia que abalou a opinião pública nacional. Todavia ninguém tem o direito de menosprezar o sacrifício em defesa da virtude.

Alegremo-nos pelos bons exemplos que sobrevivem em nosso mundo atribulado.

Rio de Janeiro, 6 de dezembro 1972

  
Card. Eugênio de Araújo Sales  
Arcebispo do Rio de Janeiro

MC.

Translation.

Archbishop of São Sebastião  
of Rio de Janeiro  
Guanabara - Brazil

PRESENTATION FOR THE 3rd EDITION OF THE BOOK ABOUT "AÍDA CURÍ"

The first edition of the "Aída Curi" Book had a letter written by Dom Jaime de Barros Câmara as the preface.

Today, for the third edition of this work, the author has asked the current Archbishop of Rio de Janeiro for a presentation.

In a world fraught with eroticism, every example of struggle for virtue and purity deserves special mentioning. Father Mauricio Curi aligns a series of arguments in favor of his sister in defense of her virginity. The reading, therefore, is useful and shows the path of Goodness.

Without any intention of judgment, it is comforting to note, on one hand, a fraternal veneration shown by the brother priest and on the other, a life in which moral values enjoy deserved highlighting. Someone may disagree with one or another interpretation of the tragedy that shook the national public's opinion. However, no one has the right to undervalue the sacrifice in defense of virtue.

Let us rejoice for the good examples that survive in our troubled world.

City of Rio de Janeiro, December 6, 1972.

Card. Eugenio de Araujo Sales  
Archbishop of Rio de Janeiro

A letter from the Vatican  
referring to the third publication.



SECRETARIA DE ESTADO

N. 297.340

VATICANO, 5 de Fevereiro de 1976

Reverendo Padre,

Teve o gesto de delicadeza de oferecer ao Sumo Pontífice um livro da sua autoria, no frontispício do qual, com a indicação do assunto versado, quis exarar devota dedicatória a Sua Santidade, explicitando os sentimentos de veneração e homenagem que lhe teriam ditado o gesto para com o Vigário de Cristo.

E-me grato vir expressar-lhe o reconhecimento do Santo Padre pelo preito, que Lhe mereceu apreço; outrossim, de transmitir-lhe os Seus votos de que desçam sobre a sua pessoa e actividades sacerdotais as graças divinas, para um fecundo ministério; a corroborar tais votos, conceda-lhe Sua Santidade a BÊNÇÃO Apostólica.

Aproveito o ensejo para afirmar-lhe protestos de consideração atenta em Cristo Senhor.

  
(+ J. Benelli, Subst.)

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Rev.do Senhor  
Pe. Maurício Curi  
Rua do Paraíso, 21

SÃO PAULO

Translation.

Secretary of State No. 297340  
Vatican, February 5, 1976

Reverend Father,

You had the courtesy gesture of offering the Pope a copy of the book written by you in which in the frontispiece, with the indication of the versed subject, wanted to register devoted dedication to His Holiness, expressing the feelings of veneration and honor that inspired the gesture to the Vicar of Christ.

And I am pleased to express recognition of the Holy Father for the homage that deserved His appreciation. Furthermore, to communicate His wishes that the divine graces bless you and your priestly activities, in order to have a fruitful ministry.

Corroborating such wishes, His Holiness grants you the Apostolic Blessing.

I take this opportunity to wish you my kindest regards and love in Christ the Lord.

J. Benelli, Subst.

Rev. Fr. Mauricio Curi  
Paraíso Street, 21

City of São Paulo

## **OPENING FOR THE FOURTH PUBLICATION.**

In a mixture of confidence and shyness, in 1975 I decided to reissue, the biography of my sister Aída. Because the second publication was all sold out since 1966, it was not possible for me to predict what effect a new publication would have, especially in the case of a fact that happened many years before.

The considerable number of letters I received from Cardinals, Bishops and Priests as well as hundreds of requests from several states made me realize that Aída continued to be a message, even many years after her death.

The demand and success encouraged me to launch this 4th publication, now revised and lengthened, having as the high point the letter written by my mother, entitled "A MOTHER'S FORGIVENESS".

She considered this fact of forgiveness not as a victory of her magnanimous spirit, but the result of the power of prayer and the grace of God. She dearly wanted to see her letter published! She understood that, in her characteristic simplicity and sincerity, if forgiveness was to be given, it was for everyone to know! I am not afraid to declare that her gesture was totally disinterested and generous, therefore pleasing to God.

She would have had great joy in seeing this new publication. However, greater consolations were reserved for her. Heaven wished that, at the time her writing came to light, she would already be next to her and our Aída...

With the rich addition of this posthumous tribute to my mother, a noble and God fearing soul, I believe that this book can truly fulfill its purpose: to be, to all who read it, a message of Love and Forgiveness.

THE AUTHOR

July 14<sup>th</sup>, 1978.

(In the 20th anniversary of Aída's death.)

## XXXII

### THEY ARE MANY!

### THEY ARE THE GLORY OF THE CHURCH!

"I saw a great crowd that no one was able to count, from every nation, tribe, people and language: they kept themselves standing before the throne and before the Lamb, in white robes and palms in hand (...). Then one of the elders talked to me and asked me: "These who are dressed in white robes, who are they and where do they come from?" I answered him: "My Lord, you know". And then he told me: "These are the survivors of the great tribulation; they have washed their robes and bleached them in the blood of the Lamb".

(The Apocalypse, Chapter 7, Verses 9, 13 and 14.)

On January 16<sup>th</sup>, 1972, before praying the Angelus with the devotees gathered at St. Peter's Square, Pope Paul VI uttered the following words about the Roman virgin and martyr, Saint Agnes:

"We would like to remind the Romans, and also all the followers of the Latin and Greek Church, that this week, precisely on the 21st, there will be festivities celebrated to St. Agnes, this young Roman girl, who is one of the most distinguished and most venerated saints of the Church that suffered martyrdom in defense of her chastity (Agnes, in Greek, means exactly chaste, pure) in the early fourth century or perhaps even earlier. The impression that the inhumane death of this simple and fragile young girl caused, victim of her own strength and purity, was so great that this tragic event not only deserved the honors of the service (one of the oldest, because in the mid-fourth century it already made part of the Philocalian calendar, indicating her tomb on the Via Nomentana) but it was also worthy of praise, that was famous and magnificent, from St. Ambrose (in 375-376). Afterwards, there was an engraving in marble attributed to Pope St. Damasus and the introduction of her name in the canon of the mass.

What we would like to recall at this moment is the popularity of this saint, a young girl of only 12, but already aware of the sublimity and pettiness that the word love can have; a martyr preserving herself a virgin and then, a role model and example of an endless line of pure young ladies, and a symbolic flower of a delicate and austere

tradition that defends and encourages the Christian beauty.

We say all this with the bitterness that is common to all, caused by recent events that moved the public opinion, seriously offending the chastity of young women and, in general, the dignity of women! We also deplore the licentiousness that, through fashion from the press and public displays, destroys the feeling of discretion that is consciously required by one of the highest values of the human being.

Especially in Rome, we would like St. Agnes' example to be remembered and her veneration celebrated, because this young martyr constitutes one of Rome's glories being worthy of poetry as well as fervor to the point that she is celebrated for centuries.

Our Lady, the Immaculate Virgin, invites us to these comforting and serene reflections”.

("L'Osservatore Romano", 1-23<sup>rd</sup>-1972)

Maria Goretti is known as the "Agnes of the twentieth century." In this century, through the imitation of Agnes and Goretti, many young ladies preferred the supreme sacrifice of relinquishing their lives in order to safeguard their honor. In the ill society of our century, flowers bloom honoring the youth. *Probably the twentieth century will be known as the century of virgin martyrs.*

Below is a list of names of some well-known girls who gave their lives to preserve their honor.



**XXXIII**  
**IMITATORS OF**  
**MARIA GORETTI.**

The data is collected from the book “Lírios no Charco” (Lilies in the Marsh) - R. P. Faustino Barcenilla (Passionist), “Editorial Franciscana” Typography, Braga, Portugal, 1969, and from the book "Lirios Sobre o Pântano" (Lilies over the Swamp) – Aury Maria Azeglio Brunetti C.M.F. 1960 – “Editora "Ave Maria" Ltda”. – Zip Code 615 – São Paulo.



Albertina Berkenbrock

ALBERTINA BERCKEMBROCK – “São Luís da Vargem do Cedro”, Diocese of Florianópolis, in the city of Imaraí and the State of Santa Catarina. She was a 12 year old girl. Murdered by Manuel Palhoça (his nickname was “Maneco”), who died remorseful many years later. The Process of Albertina’s Beatification having begun in 1952, in Rome, was finally completed in Brazil, in October 2007.

MARIA VIEIRA DA SILVA – She was murdered in the city of Açores in Portugal at the age of 14 in 1940.

RENATA SCHMYK – She was murdered in Berlim, Germany at the age of 14.

D. VIRGÍNIA DAS MERCÊS – She was a martyr wife at the age of 28. She was the mother of two children and was murdered during the Second World War in the Portuguese Province of “Ultramarina de Timor” in 1943.

MARIA HELENA AVELAR CARDOSO – She was 17 years old and was murdered in Fiães, Portugal.

CECÍLIA CIOLIN – She belonged to the catholic Association “Daughters of Mary” and was 22 years old. She was murdered in Brazil in 1946.

DOLORES SAUMELL SAN AGUSTIN – She was 14 years old and murdered in Villafranca del Panadès, Spain in 1966.

ANA MARIA BRACCI – 13 years old. Rome, Italy - 1950.

NASIBECO – She was a young black girl and murdered at the age of 16 in Mozambique.

ANA ROSA VALENTE DA SILVA – 11 years old and murdered in Portugal.

MARIA ÂNGELA ALEIXO – Born in Porto, Portugal. Murdered in Newark, U.S.A., in 1951.

MARIA AURORA MASTORATAS – She was 29 years old and was murdered in Lourenço Marques on March 14<sup>th</sup>, 1958.

OLGA GUEDES TAVARES – 19 years old. A “Daughter of Mary” murdered in 1931, in Brazil.

MARIA DANIELA SIKONGOU – 16 years old. Another African Gorette murdered in 1955.

SISTER MARIA CLEMENTINA (AFONSINA ANWARITE) – a Congolese Nun who was murdered in 1964.

ANGELA – a black Gorette from Uganda murdered in 1927.

REGINA COGINI – Murdered in Brazil.

JOAQUINA DUARTE – Freguesia da Barreira, the Diocese of Leiria, Portugal. She was murdered at the age of 16 in 1928.

ROSALINA MARINI – 17 years old. A Daughter of Mary, murdered in Brazil on October 24<sup>th</sup>, 1958.

JOSEFINA VILASECA ALSINA – Catalonia, Spain. She was 12 years old. The Canonical process recognizing her heroic virtue is already underway. The Manresa Sanitarium where the girl died is run by the nuns “Filhas de São José” (Daughters of Saint Joseph) being the same Congregation that runs the “Educandário Gonçalves de Araújo” where Aída studied in 1952.

CORPUS SOLA VALÊNCIA – Murdered in Navarra, Spain in 1943.

FILOMENA CARDOSO – Province of the Portuguese Timor. She was of Chinese origin and murdered at the age of 20 . She was the mother of a boy.

LAUDELINA MEDRANO Y MERINO – Murdered in Spain in 1959.

MARIA GRIMM – Ulm, the State of WÜRTTEMBERG, Germany murdered at the age of 13 in 1922.

HORTENSIA LÓPES GÓMEZ – Murdered in Mexico in 1952.



ISABEL CRISTINA MRAD CAMPOS – Barbacena, Minas Gerais, Brazil, 1962 – Juiz de Fora, Minas Gerais – 1982.



SANTA SCORESE – Bari, Italia – 6 febbraio 1968 – 16 marzo 1991.

This is the list of imitators of Agnes and Goretti. And to think that there are many others that are completely unknown!

And, how many (if they have not come to physical martyrdom) are victims of distressing situations and indescribable humiliations because of their honor! Persecutions, humiliations, moral and physical attacks and defamation... they bear all these aggressions in order to safeguard their physical and moral integrity!

All of them, if they have undergone or will undergo either physical or moral martyrdom, will always be the pride of the Christians... the glory of the Church.

And how huge is the number of girls who impress us by their inflexible dignity!

"Thank God, they are still in great numbers – greater even than we might

suppose and what is actually said, because they don't flaunt their seriousness and their virtues, like others who splurge their flippancy and their disorder. These young ladies who have been educated by Christian parents, pass by in the streets as well as walk through paths in the middle of the fields completely serene and cheerful. However, they are modest and go wherever and whenever they are called to do home chores as well as professional, educational and charitable activities that make us love their smiling grace, but at the same time breathe their stalwart dignity.

They are many, no doubt (...), and it would be even greater if there were, on the parents' side, more surveillance and loving kindness, and on the children's side, more trustful docility”.

(Words from His Holiness Pope Pius XII, at the time of the Beatification of St. Maria Goretti on April 30<sup>th</sup>, 1947).

Unforgettable words were still uttered by the same Pontiff, when the canonization of the little Italian saint occurred. St. Peter's Square was literally taken by a huge crowd (300 thousand devotees, including the President of Italy himself) and became a big open outdoor sanctuary. Coming from all countries, the crowd was there to hear the exaltation of the little girl's name Goretti who was from Corinaldo. And the voice of the Pope filled the square in a warm acclamation, while asking:

"Oh youths! Oh beloved sons and daughters... pupil of the eyes of Jesus as well as our own eyes... speak out! Are you strongly resolved to resist any temptation that others dare to instigate against your purity? And you, fathers and mothers, who contemplate with this crowd the teen image that, with its immaculate purity, enchants the heart! (...) Are you willing to fulfill the solemn promise to safeguard your sons and daughters to the greatest extent possible, to defend them against the great dangers that surround them, and keep them away from places that engender the path of impurity and moral perversion?"

## XXXIV

### APPRECIATIONS.

From previous publications.

(translation)

9-18<sup>th</sup>-1976

Dear Father,

Returning to Damascus three days ago, I found your book "Aída Curi". I thank you heartily. Although I was not able to read the text in Portuguese, I could understand that it was related to your sister, considered as a role model to her fellow creatures.

May the Lord bless your efforts and your apostolate

+ Maximos V

Patriarch

*Maximos V Hakim*

Greek-Melkite Catholic Patriarch

Damascus - Syria

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Porto Alegre, 5-31<sup>st</sup>-76

To dear Father Maurício Curi

I thank you for the gracious offer of the book "Aída Curi - O preço foi a própria vida!" ("The price was her own life") and I congratulate the family for the daughter and sister of an admirable inner greatness. Sincerely.

Cardinal Vicente Scherer - Metropolitan Archbishop of Porto Alegre.

\*\*\*

"I thank you for the book you sent me and I will treasure it with the warmth that inspired you" - Salvador, June 2<sup>nd</sup>, 1976.

+ Avelar, Cardinal Brandão Vilela - Archbishop of São Salvador of Bahia, Archbishop of Brazil.

\*\*\*\*

03.12<sup>th</sup>.1979.

The Rev. Monsignor Maurício Curi

I received the book of your authorship, "Aída Curi" and hope that this literary work continues its fruitful apostolate among the Brazilian youth. My cordial thank you.

Aloísio Card. Lorscheider  
Archdiocese of Fortaleza

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Dom José Newton de Almeida Baptista - Archbishop of Brasilia in Christ welcomes the esteemed Rev. Father Curi and is thankful for Aída Curi's sumptuous gift – the testimonial that our present moment mostly needs. Congratulations!

Brasília 5/28<sup>th</sup>/76

City of Belo Horizonte, March 14<sup>th</sup>, 1979

Dear Monsignor,

L. J. XTUS!

I received and thank you, from the bottom of my heart, the copy you sent me of the 4th publication of your book "Aída Curi - o preço foi a própria vida". It is a wonderful story that has done so much good and, without any doubt, will do even greater good. I have already read the two new interesting chapters that have greatly enriched the publication. These are impressive things of God's ways: in a world that is so muddied by corruption, arises the example of this Lily stained by the blood of martyrdom. The days of Agnes and Maria Goretti have not ended in the world. God's strength continues to give courage to today's martyrs!

Best regards!

From your servant and friend

Dom João Resende Costa

Archbishop of Belo Horizonte

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1-12<sup>th</sup>-77

Dear Father Maurício Curi

I hold in my hands the book about your virtuous sister. With what delight I read it! It is a book that does good for us. I give you my sincere congratulations for the publication made with high Christian spirit and evangelical simplicity. I believe that, still in this 3rd publication, it will promote the appreciation for purity among our youth. "Faxit Deus!" - With warm-hearted blessings.

Dom Manuel Pedro da Cunha Cintra – Bishop of Petropolis.

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City of Campinas, June 15<sup>th</sup>, 1976

My dear Father Maurício,

I want to thank you, with all my heart, for having sent your dainty book about your martyr-sister, the never forgotten Aída Curi.

The reading came to renew in my mind and heart the graceful and extremely gentle image of St. Maria Goretti's little sister in our own homeland and shows the beauty of that soul that the Lord wanted it be with Him - a candid lily with corolla full of her own martyred blood...

May she wave to us from Heaven so that we may have in her imitation, a beautiful soul that delights the Lord!

Thankfully

Dom Antônio Maria Alves Siqueira – Archbishop of Campinas.

(Translation)

02/17<sup>th</sup>/1978

"I appreciate the book that Your Beatitude devoted to the sweet memory of your saintly sister Aída. You did well in revealing to the public the kind and strong virtues, both human and Christian, that adorned the soul of your sister and also presenting her as a role model to be followed.

I do not intend to speak of condolences because the death of a so holy young lady is reason for joy in heaven, where she walks in as if walking into her own home. She is also a source of joy for the Church, whose fruitful breast produced such a

beautiful flower and honors the family as well as the people to whom she belongs to. This is the word of consolation that I wish to express.

Monsignor Pierre K. Medawar  
Melkite Catholic Patriarchate, Cairo, Egypt

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(Translation)

02/17<sup>th</sup>/1978

I really thank you for the book about your sister who was a heroic victim of purity. I read this book with deep emotion, impregnated by brotherly love. The testimonials are very touching and so is the scenario that you provide as to your sister's transparent soul as well as the itinerary that describes her youth toward God. But God's ways are not our ways. This is how before the beauty of her soul, Jesus wanted that the chastity martyrdom palm be her destiny just like the Italian girl she so dearly loved, Maria Goretti, and under similar circumstances.

She will be a symbol of purity for all young Brazilian ladies from your country and city. Many years have gone by, but Aída's sacrifice remains in people's memory and from the heavens above, she will be able to assist all those who call upon her.

Monsignor Neophytos Edelby  
Metropolitan of Aleppo (Syria)

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Gracious Father Maurício,

(São Paulo, 07/27<sup>th</sup>/1975)

Peace and Goodness!

I read with great interest the precious pages that Your Reverence wrote about your gifted martyr-sister, Aída Curi. It was God who chose her for such a difficult mission. The same God will give many young ladies the strength to be brave like her.

Also Your Reverence, please continue your apostleship with the Youth and Family. Cardinal Paulo Evaristo Arns - Archbishop of Sao Paulo.

\*\*\*\*



"It is a book written without hate, without pride, without accusations, without sensationalism and human pretensions. It will do great good to our families as well as the youth of our country. Your book, unpretentious and well written, is a beautiful message..."

Dom Raimundo Couto Silva - Archdiocese of Fortaleza

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"I thank you for having had the inspiration to write about Aída".

Dom Benedito de Ulhoa Vieira - Archbishop of Uberaba, the State of Minas Gerais.

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"... from the moment I read about your sister's life, written with the warm-heartedness of a brother and wisdom of an impartial historian, I had the desire to write to you (...)

I relate your sister's life to many people and, especially to girls, and it seems to me that it brings great results and I see it as a way of propagating the doctrine".

(1-25<sup>th</sup>-69 – Father Faustino de S. Domingos – Barroelas – Minho – Portugal).

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(...) Now her brother launches a book. And does this with a Christian and priest noble-mindedness. His aim is not to promote his sister as being holy and the criminals as murderers. Quite the contrary! In this Holy Year he again answers to his many friends what he thinks of that event: he continues to forgive and asks everyone to forgive. For him the fact has already passed. The important thing is not to relegate to oblivion the fact that, one day, a young schoolgirl, having to choose between eroticism, degradation and her own dignity, chose dignity, with all the consequences arising from her choice.

(...) Do the young people who surround you a favor... tell them Maria Goretti's or Aída's story, without inducing them to hate murderers. They also had their drama to suffer from. (...) Afterwards, recommend Father Curi's book about his sister. (...)

Occasionally, it is necessary to remember people like Aída, lest we do not end up in a civilization of robots and objects.

(From the Article "Um momento por Aída Curi" (A moment for Aída Curi) - Rev. Zezinho SCJ - October 1975).

\*\*\*

"What pleased me the most in your book was that you did not have to use shade to give relief to Aída's image. Yes: the chapter FORGIVENESS, we do not know whether it should be a preface or epilog. I personally think it's the whole book".

Father Paulo J. de Souza, SJ.

\*\*\*

"Aída Curi reached a fully human and Christian maturity by living the Gospel. She built her life in God like a house on the rock. Her image reminds new generations the need to be true Christians. We also need to have the courage to put God above everything else in our lives and go, when necessary, against the stream. Therefore, we will radiate joy, peace, purity, goodness, mercy and love... fruits of the Holy Spirit".

São Paulo, May 2<sup>nd</sup>, 1974.

Father Enrico Pepe and Father Francisco Manunta

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Dear Mr. Director of the Bookstore "Ave Maria" 12/01<sup>st</sup>/75

We are pleased to acknowledge the receipt of the publication mentioned below, that we are sending to the Library of Congress in Washington, D. C.

Curi, Maurício, Father - "Aída Curi, o preço foi a própria vida!" 3<sup>rd</sup> Publication, 1975 (2 copies).

Cordially

Rodney G. Sarle

Field Director – The Library of Congress Office, Brazil - Rio de Janeiro.

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"An episode like this, that shocked the public opinion, could not fail to be properly documented, as it truly was through this literary work".

William Habib - Consul of Lebanon in São Paulo.

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"... Aída's personality is faithfully described; in those lapidary words is the exuberant moral formation of the Maria Goretti of Brazil (...). This magnificent literary work expresses two truths: Aída's virtue and how much her brother misses her".

(02/13<sup>th</sup>/60 - Rio de Janeiro - José Valladão - Family Lawyer in this lawsuit)

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One must accept that, if times have changed, it does not mean that the Christian ideal of purity stops finding shelter in chosen souls who are able to give their own lives in any kind of circumstances in order to protect them. And another truth that catches the eye from reading the book is: it is almost always from a Christian home, like that of Aída Curi as well as from a virile and motivated education that lives arise astonishing us by their heroic donation".

(Alfredo Mattar - secondary teacher and parent)

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"A great sadness invaded my heart, when I started reading your book. I put myself in the place of your sister and I would do everything possible to safeguard my honor. A young lady who was only 18 years old sacrificed herself to save her honor as well as that of her family. Today, only her brother's longing remains as well as his admiration for her thoughts, the purity of her soul, her strength and personality. For the love of God her sacrifice was worth it. Still these days one hears comments about Aída Curi".

District of Paraíso, São Paulo, May 21<sup>st</sup>, 1975.

Aliçar Chammas – 15 years old.

"It is undeniable, given the Objective Truth, not only of Aída's physical virginity but, above all, her moral and spiritual integrity. Thus, only illuminated by a

Superior Light - GOD, who always led her (she having chosen only God as being her everything), we understand her absolute option for Him, through Martyrdom. It was what we concluded from reading the book “Aída CURI, o preço foi a própria vida”!(“Aída Curi, the price was her own life”!).

Sao Paulo, April 19<sup>th</sup>, 1973.

(the couple Munir Cury - Public Prosecutor and Afife Lemes Kaial Cury - attorney).

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(...) I was pleased with the book Aída Curi, whose fate, just as that of Saint Maria Goretti, moved me so much that I put Aída in my heart as a holy inspiring and protective soul.



Igino Giordani

2-11<sup>th</sup>-1977 Rome - Italy - writer and former

Member of the Italian Parliament.

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"Grazie del suo libro e dell'occasione che mi ha dato di conoscere Aída". (Thank you for your book and the opportunity of allowing me to know Aída).



Chiara Lubich (1977 Templeton Award for the Progress of Religion) 1-00040  
Rocca di Papa, Italy.

## THE AUTHOR.



Monsignor Mauricio Curi, born in Brazil, in the city of “Pedro Leopoldo”, state of Minas Gerais (11/11/1940), has his origin from the city of Saidnaya, Syria. His parents belonged to the Melkite Catholic Church of the Byzantine Rite. He studied during his first years of Seminary with the Salvatorian Fathers in “Piedade” (a suburb of Rio de Janeiro) and afterwards in the city of Jundiaí (São Paulo).

He studied Philosophy at the “Seminário de São José” (Saint Joseph’s Seminary”), in the district of “Rio Comprido”, in the State of Rio de Janeiro (1960-1962). Then he was sent by his bishop, Dom Elias Coueter, the first Melkite bishop of Brazil, to study Theology in Jerusalem with the White Fathers who are Missionaries of Africa (1962-1965).

In 1965, he was ordained priest in the city of his parents in Saidnaya (Syria). Later, he went to São Paulo, where he worked for 13 years as Vicar Cooperator in the Melkite Cathedral of “Nossa Senhora do Paraíso” (“Our Lady of Paradise”).

He worked as a volunteer at the “Associação de Assistência à Criança Deficiente” (AACD) (Assistance Association for Impaired Children). He was a substitute Religious

Assistant for two years at the “Associação das Filhas de Maria” (“Daughters of Mary Association”) of the Archdiocese of São Paulo.

In 1977, he received the title of Archimandrite (which corresponds more or less to the title of Monsignor in the Latin Rite).

He has been away from Brazil since the second half of 1979. He attended the “Escola de Espiritualidade para Sacerdotes” (Spirituality School for Priests), an initiative of the Focolare Movement in Italy, in two periods: in Frascati, from 1979 to 1980 and then years later in Loppiano, near Florence, in 1986.

He was parson of two Melkite churches in Syria (Kafarbo and Yabrud) for 6 years (1980-1986). After this time, he spent five months in Africa staying between the countries of the Republic of Cameroon and the Ivory Coast. Guest of his friends, the focolarini priests, he accomplished a pastoral experience there.

In mid-1986, he arrived in Egypt, serving in the Melkite Church of Cairo, first as a Cooperator Vicar of the Church of the “Imaculada Conceição” (“Immaculate Conception”) and as of September 1989, he became a parish priest.

In Cairo, he was assistant Judge of the Ecclesiastical Court for the Melkites of Cairo (1993 - 2000), and, later, the Defender of the Bond of this same Court (2008-2011).

He is the author of five books written in Portuguese: "Maria Rosa, o Dom de Consolar" and “Aída Curi, o preço foi a própria vida" (This book, published and reprinted four times by “Edições Paulinas e Editora Ave Maria”, in São Paulo, is currently all sold out). In Egypt, he published in the French and Arabian languages the book "Catechism for the First Communion" and, only in French, a biography about an Egyptian Melkite lay, Dr. Boutros Cassab.

On the occasion of the 80th Birthday of His Holiness Benedict XVI, he published a book in French: "Deux Papes, Une seule devise: Amour et Vérité".

In progress: "Crianças Brasileiras" Tudo vence o Amor- com "Poesias do Autor" (“Brazilian Children”/ “Love beats Everything” with “The Author’s Poems”).

Besides these books, he contributed with articles and poems of social and religious significance for the newspaper “O São Paulo” of the Latin Archdiocese of São Paulo and currently writes for the French and Arabian language newspaper "Le Messenger", the only Catholic newspaper in Egypt.

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The author clarifies that his family never received copyrights nor earned profits from any publication - books or magazines – in relationship to Aída.

And, regarding this book, he states that any profits will be directed to charities.