

My Tribute to the Memory of Ljubinka Jambrek (1961-2014)

The Bible Institute grieves the great loss of our sister, Ljubinka Jambrek, the wife of Stanko Jambrek, Dean of the Bible Institute and Editor in Chief of the Evangelical Journal of Theology *Kairos*. She was a mighty force behind the scenes in the life of the Institute. Her ministry was a great encouragement and spiritual pulse for our institution.

Our sister was born on February 1, 1961 in Murtino Village in Macedonia. Her parents Zorka and Mihail Palankov were members of the Evangelical Methodist Church. They raised Ljubinka together with four other daughters in a Christian atmosphere of practical service. Ljubinka, therefore, regularly participated in the life and activities of the local Evangelical Methodist Church. Although she began serving in the church in 1975 by working with children, she met Jesus Christ as her Savior three years later. In the period of 1979-1982, she was a youth leader and a teacher in Sunday School in the church in Murtino.

She graduated from a Civil Engineering Technical High School. From a young age, she adored literature and languages. In 1980-1981, she studied philology and comparative literature at the Faculty of Philosophy in Skopje, but she had to give up her studies in order to help her family during her mother's illness; so she returned to Murtino. During the autumn of 1982, she moved to Vienna, Austria to study biblical theology at the Evangelical Bible Institute. Her studies were completed in 1985 and she received her diploma a year later.

During her studies, she made a firm decision to work in the kingdom of God. After obtaining her academic degree, she returned to Murtino. In 1986, she worked, gathering youth from three local churches, providing counsel and lectures on biblical discipleship. Successful work with young people and children resulted in her becoming an assistant to the pastors of the Evangelical Methodist Churches in Murtino and Strumica. Her ministry was not only to young people, rather she regularly visited the elderly and disabled in Murtino and Strumica and encouraged others to follow her lead.

At the missionary conference in Utrecht, Netherlands in 1988, she met her future husband, Stanko Jambrek. They married in May, 1989. She moved to Zagreb where Stanko was serving as a pastor in the Evangelical Church "Good News". As a faithful assistant to her husband, she tirelessly served in the church in many ways, especially among needy people during the war. She was very practical; she knew when and how to listen to people, when to serve them practically, provide advice, or direct them to the word of God.

She participated in many Christian educational programs including internationally acknowledged courses for inductive Bible study, *Precept Upon Precept* organized by Precept Ministries International (Chattanooga, USA), as well as *Turning Point* courses on biblical counseling and work with drug addicts organized by Teen Challenge International. In 1992-1994, she attended the postgraduate study of Christian Counseling at the Evangelical Theological Seminary. Again, she gave up her studies, but this time to give birth to her daughter. Afterward, she continued in a biblical counseling program at New Covenant International University (USA). She graduated in 2001 with a degree in pastoral counseling.

She loved to praise God. Ever as a child, she practiced her voice and often sang at home. Ljubinka and her sisters, Lenka and Nada, often celebrated God in church as a trio. When she married and moved to Zagreb, she devoted her life to her husband and family, and worked in church. Their home was often full of her voice and songs of praise.

She loved to pray. She prayed inspired by the word of God, inspired by her personal needs and the needs of her family, the needs of the local church and those of other people. She prayed regularly for spiritual workers, especially those with heavy burdens in their service. She knew how to notice and recognize their problems and burdens. She liked to encourage and stimulate them to be persistent. During the entire period of her marriage, she was a prayer representative and steadfast supporter of her husband Stanko in his pastoral service, teaching and writing. She faithfully presented her children Daniel, Kristina and Ivan to God. For many years, she prayed steadily and asked God to choose, shape and prepare a special Christian maiden as a future wife for her son Daniel. She was doing the same for Ivan. She was praying also for Kristina by asking God for a great, faithful young man who would serve with great dedication together with Kristina in the kingdom of God. Her children were always in her daily prayers.

She loved to study the word of God. First thing every morning, she would read the Bible and pray, and afterward perform her other tasks. If something happened and needed to be done before reading the Bible and praying, she would be very nervous and eagerly anticipate a time in the day when she could devote herself to reading and prayer. Her Bibles are filled with underlined text and specific pointers to selected verses through which God spoke to her during her Bible readings and reflections on consumed texts.

She loved to learn and use languages. In addition to her native Macedonian, she knew Croatian, English and Russian. During her primary and secondary education, as well as during her study of philology and comparative literature, she studied Russian. At the Evangelical Bible Institute in Vienna, she received a basic introduction to German, and she learned to use English and Croatian fluently. Most of the lectures there were held in these languages. Croatian became her

primary language, solidly established by living in Zagreb. She perfected English by living and studying in the United States.

She loved to write. Her letters in Croatian and English were long, colorful and detailed. She published a dozen professional articles in Croatian.

Ljubinka enjoyed translation work. Her translation work included works by A.W. Tozer from English to Macedonian, and Christian films and videos for children from English to Croatian, including *The Challenger and the Champion*, *For Jenny with Love*, *The Gospel of John*, *Shiokari Pass*, *Super Book* and *Joni*. During her stay in the United States (1993-1994), she began to translate several articles into Croatian. Upon her return, she devoted herself partly to the job of translation. She translated twenty-three books from English to Croatian, five significant historical documents, and more than a hundred professional and scientific papers. She did translation work for the journal *Duhovno vrelo* from its beginning. For the journal *Kairos, Evangelical Journal of Theology* she was involved in translating scientific and professional articles from English to Croatian since its foundation in 2007. She also successfully edited final texts in both Croatian and English editions. In the area of translation, she will be especially missed by the *Kairos* team. In Croatia, she was well known for her high quality, consistent and rapid simultaneous interpretation of conference speakers and preachers of the gospel.

Supremely, Ljubinka loved her family and served them, but that love grew from her love and trust in Jesus Christ. Her love and trust in Jesus led her to selfless service, a service that will be missed, but which serves as an example to follow.

*Tom Sibley, Director
The Bible Institute, Zagreb*