



Anugraha

St. Ann's Provincialate

J 1166A, Palam Vihar
Gurgaon, Haryana 122 017
Tel: 0124-4023735

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The righteous perish, and no one ponders it in his heart; devout men are taken away, and no one understands that the righteous are taken away to be spared from evil. Those who walk uprightly enter into peace; they find rest as they lie in death. Isaiah 57:1-2

Dearest Sisters,

On 21st June, 2014 at 03.15 p.m. at St. Ann's Convent, Jamnagar, Sr. Mary Anatolia Joseph serenely and unexpectedly passed away leaving everybody in the Community and in the Province shocked and confused. The doctor certified the cause of her death as Bronchial Asthma.

Sr. Anatolia (Theresia Joseph) was born on 13th November, 1933 at Vaikam in Kerala to Mr. Joseph John and Mrs. Mary Varghese, who were deeply religious. She is the 5th child in the family of 6 children (5 girls and 1 boy). Having experienced the stirrings of the divine call to follow Jesus more closely, with missionary zeal she joined our Congregation. She entered the Postulancy on 2nd January, 1954 and received the Holy Habit on 1st January, 1955. She made her First Profession on 1st January, 1957 and her Perpetual Vows on 1st January, 1963.

Her first transfer was to the Community of Jamnagar to which she returned twice. In June 1959 she was sent to Secunderabad to complete her teachers training. She has served the Communities of Secunderabad, Raichur, Moradabad, Sanquelim, Kazipet, Rampur, Isanagar, Roorkee, Mithapur and Varvala in the capacity of a teacher and Superior. In fact Sr. Anatolia was an excellent teacher. She gave a firm foundation of education to the little children entrusted to her care. Her infinite patience coupled with motherly tenderness won the hearts of the little children. Serenity shone on her face. Though delicate in health (she suffered from Asthma for years) she was punctual for all the spiritual exercises with never a demand for any privilege. She was a woman of prayer and of great faith. Her untold courage helped her to stand firm in difficult situations of life.

Sr. Anatolia was a gentle lady who perhaps in the eyes of the world did not do great things but did small things with much love. Notwithstanding her poor health, she carried out her tasks with generosity and faithfulness. She was always available, warm and pleasant to all those who came in contact with her. In a special way she was close to all the priests and lay people. She willingly accepted to do the parlour duty and used it as an opportunity for evangelization. Many Sisters speak of her as a compassionate person with preferential love for the poor. She gave a listening ear to all those who sought her assistance. Her sensitive heart led her to be with those who suffered or were marginalized.

Many a time death knocked at her door (due to her weak health). But 23rd January 2001, was a different experience. She was beaten up cruelly by robbers who invaded our Convent at Isanagar injuring other Sisters too. The doctors had given up hope and the local papers pronounced her dead. Sr. Anatolia

however battled with death, overcame the trauma and bounced back to normal life. She had the courage and goodness to say ‘I forgive them (robbers)’.

Loss of appetite marked the last week of her earthly life. On the morning of 21st June, 2014 at 05.30 a.m., the Sisters found her fallen in front of her room. From then onwards though fully conscious, she spoke to none but communicated to everyone through signs. The doctor treated her for fever and advised that an x-ray be taken as her face was swollen. Her intake of food was very poor throughout the day. In the afternoon when the Sisters got ready to take her to the hospital for the x-ray, they found her breathing her last. The doctor was immediately rushed in who declared her dead. It was 03.15 p.m.

From the moment the Parish Priest, Fr. Manu CMI and the Community of the CMI Fathers received the death news they were on their feet helping our Sisters in whatever way they could. The Parish Priest provided the mobile mortuary and hence the mortal remains of Sr. Anatolia were laid in the Convent chapel for three days awaiting the arrival of her dear ones. Rt. Rev. Bishop Jose Chitooarambil, Bishop of Rajkot came twice to pay homage to our dear Sister. A true Shepherd and Father! He immediately sent a message to the whole Diocese intimating the death news. From then on, Fathers, Sisters, parishioners came in large number from far and near spending their valuable time in praying the rosary and chanting the office for the dead. Bishop Emeritus, Rt. Rev. Gregory Karotemprel, CMI spent time with the Sisters sharing in their grief.

The requiem mass was celebrated in Sacred Heart Church, Jamnagar on 23rd June at 10.30 a.m. Rt. Rev. Bishop Jose Chitooarambil, Bishop of Rajkot was the main celebrant. 25 priests of the Diocese concelebrated the mass. The Church was packed to capacity. The Parish Priest, Fr. Manu CMI in his homily said “Today is the wedding day of Sr. Anatolia; the bride has met her bridegroom and both are in close union with each other. Hence it is a day of joy and celebration for all of us, though we feel her absence. Sr. Anatolia had a winning smile. She was an ‘other-centered’ person. Though physically weak, she always had a kind thought for others. She touched the hearts of many priests with a humane relationship.” After the mass the mortal remains of Sr. Anatolia were laid to rest in the Parish cemetery at Hapa. Three nephews and three nieces of Sr. Anatolia were present.

I wish to communicate my heart-felt gratitude to Sr. Alexis and the entire Community, who have served Sr. Anatolia lovingly especially when she had the knee operation in November, 2013. I express my sentiments of profound gratitude to Rt. Rev. Bishop Jose Chitooarambil for his comforting and strengthening presence in our moments of grief. I am grateful to Fr. Manu CMI, the Parish priest and the Community of the CMI fathers at Jamnagar who are a part of our family. We are blessed to receive both spiritual and material help from them whenever we are in need. The senior members and the youth of the parish deserve appreciation and a special thank-you for being with our Sisters day and night, praying for the departed soul and seeing to the arrangements of the funeral service. Thanks to our Sisters of the Communities of Arambhada, Mithapur, Varvala, Sabarmati, Mehemadabad and Bandra whose presence was a strong support for our Sisters at Jamnagar and a sign of communion for the people of Jamnagar.

Finally I wish to thank Sr. Renvilda D’Souza (Provincial Councillor) who represented me on this occasion. Her serene and solicitous presence has definitely brought solace and comfort to our Sisters.

We owe a debt of gratitude to the family of Sr. Anatolia for having offered her to be a part of our big family. Let us continue to offer our prayers for our departed Sister that God may grant her eternal rest.

Yours affectionately,
Sr. Eulazia Fernandes
Provincial Superior