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**“And I heard a voice from heaven saying, “Write this: Blessed are the dead who from now on die in the Lord.” “Yes,” says the Spirit, “they will rest from their labours, for their deeds follow them.” Revelation 14:13**

Dearest Sisters,

Once again Death finds itself at our door; this time beckoning Sr. Benedicta Kujur, leading her to the heavenly Kingdom. 55 years only; short life indeed! It was 12<sup>th</sup> September, 2010 at 4 p.m. that Sr. Benedicta who was in the ICU in Holy Family Hospital said Her final yes to the Lord as she breathed her last. The doctors declared that she died of SLE with Lupus Nephritis which led to multiple-organ dysfunction and acute cerebral hemorrhage.

Sr. Benedicta Kujur was born on 6<sup>th</sup> November 1954 to Mr. John Bijo and Mrs. Veronica Kujur. Sr. Benedicta lost her father at an early age and her mother when she was 22 years old. She has two brothers and one sister and was the youngest of the four siblings. The loss of her parents, and the financial crisis at home forced her to stay and work with our Sisters at Rampur who cared and looked after her thereafter. Her presence and her devoted service were much appreciated by the Sisters. Edified by the dedicated work of the Sisters she expressed her desire to join religious life. As she did not have the required qualification she went to Duldula and pursued her studies. She had a heart for the poor, the sick and the suffering. This led her to opt for nursing. On 7<sup>th</sup> May 1989 she joined the Postulancy in Raichur, as a full fledged Nurse.

She made her first commitment on 21<sup>st</sup> February, 1992. After her Juniorate in 1993 she began her healing ministry as a nurse in Tamnar. Her hard work in remote villages, visiting the sick on two wheelers and very often on foot for kilometers will be remembered. Sr. Benedicta cheerfully served as a nurse in the communities of Mohanlalganj - June 1997, Mithapur – June 1998.

She made her Final Commitment on 21<sup>st</sup> February 1999. In 2000 she was back to Tamnar and in June 2003 she was transferred to Mohanlalganj. Due to her ill health Sr. Benedicta was sent to Bandra for treatment in June 2005. After many investigations it was confirmed that she was suffering from SLE - Lupus Nephritis. This was a period of great trial which she faced with patience, courage and faith. True, there were moments of discouragement too, but faith prevailed. God was gracious to her and having recovered she was sent to Mithapur in June 2007. But she was not completely healed. The ravages of the sickness were even physically visible. Her treatment continued but she fulfilled her duties with the spirit of a warrior unto the last. In April 2010, having received the transfer to Arambhada, perhaps the first time in her life, she was upset and wrote to me that she was not well at all and would not be able to work there. Later in the month of May having encountered her personally and with the consent of the Council Sr. Benedicta was transferred to Talegaon. It was hoped that she would have a lighter schedule and get some rest here since we have no elderly Sisters confined to bed. She reached Talegaon on 28<sup>th</sup> of June 2010. The Community of Talegaon was privileged to have her, though only for a month where in spite of her ill health she continued to serve the sick Sisters not considering her own aches and pains.

On 24<sup>th</sup> July she complained of fever and severe headache. After a few days she reported that her vision was blurred. She was given symptomatic treatment and later hospitalized for further treatment for Lupus Nephritis and hip replacement surgery in Holy Family, Bandra. She was discharged on 31<sup>st</sup> August and was delighted that she could walk. Her happiness was short lived. On the night of 2<sup>nd</sup> September she was re-admitted for vomiting and severe stomachache. Various investigations were carried on up to 9<sup>th</sup> September. She was very grateful to the service rendered to her. Her condition deteriorated and her end came abruptly, totally unexpected on the 12<sup>th</sup> of September.

Sr. Benedicta was a woman of Prayer. Her life is a story of suffering and struggles faced bravely through prayer and deep trust in God. A simple, silent soul; never a complaint was on her lips. In fact silence was the golden virtue which urged her to observe much and be attentive to the needs of others. This was inborn in her. Life had taught her to accept things as they came her way. She had a very high capacity for endurance. Her personal experience of life enabled her to be very understanding and sympathetic to the sick and the suffering people. Sr. Benny, as we fondly called her, was very kind, gentle and thoughtful. One hardly heard her for she was a woman of few words. Her love was shown in action. Her compassionate heart never allowed her to stop and think a while about her leisure nor about her health.

While traveling in the train if she found some one ill she would let go the comfort of sleeping and spend the night sitting beside the sick person caring for her/him like a Good Samaritan. She had good knowledge of herbal medicines. While walking to the villages if she found some one ailing on the way side she would search for some herbs in the forest which could relieve them of their pain. Such was her sensitivity! She herself gravely ill and hospitalized in Holy Family Hospital, during her recent illness, Sr. Benny was found caring for a sick Sister who had high fever in the middle of the night. She never lost an opportunity to serve the sick. A true daughter of Florence Nightingale!

After the funeral mass which was officiated by Fr. Lawrence OCD at St. Ann's Convent, Talegaon the mortal remains of Sr. Benedicta Kujur were laid to rest at our cemetery at Talegaon.

I thank Dilip, nephew of Sr. Benny, who was with her during her last days on earth. I extend our heart felt condolences to all her family members and thank them for offering her to serve God in our Congregation.

I express my heartfelt gratitude to Sr. Hedwig and all our Sisters at Bandra for their loving service to Sr. Benedicta during her illness, especially in her last agonizing moments. You have been a blessing to us. I convey my condolences to Sr. Ida and the Community of Talegaon on the loss of Sr. Benedicta and thank you for accompanying her by your prayers in her last journey. May God be your strength in this moment of trial. I am grateful to the Sisters who made it possible to come from various Communities to be with and bid farewell to Sr. Benny. We are grateful to the Sisters of Chakan and Nigdi for sharing in our sorrow. I thank Fr. Joy and Fr. Lawrence who are always a source of strength and comfort to our Sisters in our moments of grief.

We are sure that Sr. Benedicta Kujur has been purified in the crucible of suffering and is already enjoying heavenly bliss. In her we have a powerful intercessor in heaven.

Yours affectionately,

Sr. Eulazia Fernandes  
Provincial Superior