

**St. Ann's Provincialate
B – 43, Cariappa Road
Bolarum – 500 010
Secunderabad, A.P.**



23rd January 2015.

Dearest Sisters,

“Come, you whom my Father has blessed...
take for your heritage the kingdom prepared for you”. (Mt. 25:34)

The Jubilee celebration at Secunderabad was just over, when we received the sad news of the passing away of our dear Sister Bernardine. With a gap of only two days, the Lord has called another of His beloved spouses to His heavenly kingdom and we bow our heads to His Holy Will.

Sr. Bernardine was born at Bendor, Mangalore, on 25th December 1929, to God-fearing parents, Rosario and Josephine D’Silva. She entered the Novitiate of the Sisters of St. Ann of Providence at Secunderabad on 21st June 1951 and was clothed in the religious habit on 1st January 1952. She made her First Profession on 1st January 1954 and Perpetual Profession on 1st January 1960.

All through the greater part of her life she worked as a dedicated, efficient and responsible teacher in various Communities, namely, Moradabad, Secunderabad, Kazipet, Tivim, Sanquelim and Roorkee till the year 1996, when the community of Talegaon welcomed her for a period of rest and quiet. In 1997 she helped in the Kindergarten department in Derebail. St. Ann’s Convent, Bolarum, was her next abode and then she was transferred to St. Ann’s Home, Bolarum in 2005 where she remained till the end of her life’s journey.

Sister Bernardine was really herself in the classroom. She loved to teach the little ones. She saw to it that each one did her/his best in the class. She could handle the boys with ease, and they in turn understood their teacher, who loved them sincerely. Her humorous stories and inventions kept the community in roars of laughter, especially during the hours of recreation. Sister Bernardine was a woman of prayer. Despite her illness we would find her before the Blessed Sacrament silently imploring the Lord to keep her close to Him and strengthen her efforts and sacrifices at bringing peace and harmony to this rough-torn world. She remembered that Jesus told His disciples they should always pray and never be discouraged. (Lk: 18:1) That is why she fulfilled her duties keeping God’s promises in mind. She surrendered herself to the Blessed Virgin Mary who pondered all things and kept them in her heart. Her great faith in the Mother of God was remarkable. She was interested in the homilies of the Fathers who celebrated the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass at the Home and when something seemed out of her grasp she would make it a point to clarify from one of her companions, which goes to show how she treasured the Word of God, filled with love and zeal for the Church and God’s kingdom. God’s Word became a lamp for her steps as she grew in holiness.

Sister was an avid reader and a good orator. She went out of herself to help the poor and needy and was generous to the core. The message of love, compassion and mercy of Jesus was very evident in her religious life. She would often speak of the Italian Sisters and their love for everyone, in particular for the less fortunate. Last February 2014 she was getting ready for her Diamond Jubilee and was very happy to share her joy with her companions and her loved ones. How grateful she

was to the Lord of the harvest for the gift of her vocation and for keeping her safe and sound to celebrate this glorious event.

As a strong follower of the Cross, Sister Bernardine was not afraid to face perils and whenever she returned from the hospital she would joyfully magnify the Lord. Her soul rejoiced in the Lord her Saviour. The last visit, however, brought no healing. She was ready when the Lord came to call her.

Sister Bernardine was diagnosed as a case of Coronary Artery Disease (CAD) with hypertension and Diabetes Mellitus type 2. She had been having regular check-ups for the same. On 29th May 2014, she was sent to St. Ann's Hospital, Fatimanagar, Warangal and there it was confirmed that she had a heart problem. She often complained of breathlessness, chest pain and a burning sensation, for which she was treated and felt much better. This gave her the opportunity to continue with her daily activities. Often she fell sick with heart problem and was admitted in 'Sterling Hospital', Secunderabad.

On 13th January 2015 she complained of severe chest pain and was admitted into Hospital in a critical condition and diagnosed with Myocardial Infarction (Mild heart attack). The doctors were very kind and caring and did their level best to alleviate the pain and discomfort. All thanks go to the Medical staff and all those who came to her assistance.

On 15th January 2015, she took bad again with similar symptoms of breathlessness and heart burn; around 11.00 a.m. she became unconscious and restless. The doctors explained to the Sister-in-charge that she needed ventilation but could not be given the same owing to her serious condition. Instead, she was given oxygen with the help of an Endo-Tracheal tube, till the end. On 17th January 2015 at 10.40 a.m., she breathed her last.

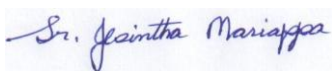
The Funeral Mass was celebrated on 18th January 2015, at 3.00 p.m. in St. Joseph's Church, Bolarum. In his homily, the chief celebrant, Father Aloysius, thanked her pious family, who had initiated her into choosing her own vocation and being formed in that direction. It was attended by Sr. Julia Victor, the Vicar General, the Provincial Superiors of the Northern and Southern Provinces of India, few local Priests, Sisters from our neighbouring Communities and from the North and South Provinces as well as her nephew, grand niece and few relatives. We express our heartfelt condolences to the members of her family and to all her other relatives and friends.

Sr. Bernadine is no more. But, she will be remembered in the minds and hearts of all those, whose lives she touched with maternal care.

I am deeply grateful to Sr. Meera, Junior Sisters and the elderly Sisters for their untiring aid both physical and spiritual and especially Sister Jyothi Pavitha, the nurse at the Home, who was by her side till the end. May the good God reward them with all that is good and fruitful.

Dear Sisters, let us pray to our gentle Saviour to grant eternal pardon to Sr. Bernadine and give her spirit light and endless rest.

United in love and prayer,



(Provincial Superior)