

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



23rd January 2015.

Dearest Sisters,

‘Lord I rejoice in your cross and in the power of your love.
May my heart be always open to your call’

This supplication, often on the lips of our dear Sister Catherine Yemmi, encouraged her to move forward with infinite patience, stamina and cool courage for the whole span of her religious life in the Congregation of the Sisters of St. Ann. She had a call within a call to suffer most of her Religious life with the strength and endurance of Christ her Spouse.

As a young novice Sr. Catherine was deeply in love with the Crucified Saviour and in all her enthusiasm, implored the Lord for the gift of “suffering”. The Lord in return, was delighted with His spouse and granted the request and so it was that the Holy Cross became a sign of hope in her life.

Sr. Catherine was born in Pune, on May 4, 1954 to a pious couple Peter and Paulina Yemmi. She was the first vocation from Mudgal Karnataka, and following her example many joined Priestly and Religious Life. On July 27, 1975 she entered our Religious congregation and made her vestition on January 3, 1977. She committed her life to the Lord on January 1, 1979 by Religious Profession and on January 3, 1985 she consecrated herself to the Lord forever with Perpetual Profession.

After her Juniorate at Secunderabad in the year 1979, the zeal for the spread of God’s kingdom prompted Sr. Catherine to spend twenty long years in the Philippines as a Missionary. The Sisters of the Philippine Mission have this to say: “Sister had a friendly nature; anyone could easily approach her. She was often mistaken for a Filipina, with her sweet smile radiating joy. Sister Catherine was dedicated and committed to her school apostolate at Cainta Catholic School. She was generous and had love for the poor; in fact, she helped many poor students in their education. As a Superior in Cainta Community, she was strict but at the same time, compassionate.”

Upon learning of her death, a student from Philippines who visited her at Secunderabad related thus: “Sr. Catherine had been a mother and confidant to me and was always consoling me and giving me advice. After 25 years since our last meeting, I had a chance to go to India and met Sr. Catherine. I will treasure those moments. I and my family will surely miss her.”

Sr. Catherine concluded the challenging but fulfilled missionary journey in the Philippines and returned to St. Ann’s Home, Bolarum in 2001 for a period of rest. Recovering her health, she moved on to our mission presence in Fatimanagar Home and took care of the household duties with utmost love and compassion.

In June 2003, Sr. Catherine was in-charge of the boarding at St. Ann’s, Secunderabad and then in 2004 as animator at St. Ann’s Novitiate, Bolarum. In 2005 owing to her ill health she returned to St. Ann’s Convent, Secunderabad. There she was taking care of the boarders. In 2006 she was assigned the task of teaching Catechism in school and preparing the children for the Sacrament of the Eucharist in the Parish. She was appreciated for her great love, responsibility and devotion to the task of forming young minds in faith. In 2013, she obediently accepted to handle the Technical School in spite of her weak physical condition, always trusting in the Lord.

Sister was very soft spoken and kindhearted. Her faith in God was made visible in her quiet moments spent in the chapel without even being noticed by others. This was the secret of her optimistic

approach towards her illness and sufferings. She was a person who never complained of anything but would hope for the better even in the worst situations. Even in her physical suffering she was instrumental in securing help for the needy children through OPAM, an organization funding the education of poor students.

In the month of June 2014, Sr. Catherine was hospitalized in Yashodha Hospital, Secunderabad, where an emergency exploratory laparotomy was done as she felt discomfort and complained of multiple episodes of vomiting associated with obstipation. The Surgeon found transverse colon obstruction and the spread of cancer, to the liver and pancreas. As they were unable to do any radical surgery, the specialist surgeons carried out palliative surgery.

After recovering from surgery she was under the care of an Oncologist in St. Ann's Hospital, Fatimanagar, from 2nd September 2014, for the complete treatment of Cancer. The doctors were in a dilemma to start the treatment as the condition of health of Sr. Catherine was very weak and the disease was advancing rapidly. However after repeated blood transfusions her general condition improved. Then Chemotherapy was started. She did well absolutely up to the 7th cycle of Chemotherapy. As she underwent the 9th Chemo on 22nd December, 2014 she complained of nausea for which she received medication but with no relief. From December 28, 2014 onwards she was with continuous medical treatment and her condition fluctuated.

On 13th January she called Sr. Sophy and said, "Let Jesus take me". After which Fr. Kiran administered the Sacrament Anointing of the Sick. After the reception of the Sacrament there was a dramatic change in her spiritual disposition. She became very calm, quiet and peaceful. About 3.30 am on January 14, her breathing was slow and she looked around and breathed her last in the midst of Sisters and staff on duty. Her mortal remains were brought to St. Ann's Convent, Secunderabad, to the community where she belonged, for the last rites.

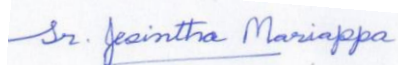
Sr. Catherine spent her last days in the company of her only brother, Mr. David, sister in-law and nephew at Fatimanagar hospital. As we thank them with grateful hearts for the greatest gift of Sr. Catherine to our Congregation, we pray for them during the Holy Eucharist in which we bid farewell to our dear sister departed. We express our heartfelt condolences to her dear brother, sisters, priest cousin brother and all the other family members.

The funeral Mass was celebrated by Msg. Swarna Bernard, Vicar of the Archdiocese of Hyderabad, at St. Mary's Basilica, Secunderabad. Sisters from Central, Southern and Northern Provinces together with the students, staff, and religious of the other Congregations were present.

I express my sincere gratitude to Sr. Antonia and the Sisters of Secunderabad Community for enabling Sr. Catherine to cope with her sufferings and to attend to the needs of the Community and its mission. I am also grateful to Sr. Sophy, Sr. Arogya and all the sisters, doctors and nurses for their timely care, concern and medical assistance during these six months of her stay at Fatimanagar.

Whenever I met Sr. Catherine, she always had one thing to say, "Do not worry about me, I'll be alright". On the 13th night when she was very serious, at about 10.00 pm, I called her over the phone. With difficult breath she told me not to worry about her and wished me all the best for the forthcoming Golden and Diamond Jubilee celebration. Physical suffering did not paralyze her to reach out to the needs of the Church and the Congregation. We salute Sr. Catherine for her heroic act of participating in the passion of Christ with a spirit of faith and determination, deep conviction and optimistic hope. Let us offer our prayers and sacrifices for the repose of her dear soul that she may be brought to the abode of peace and light and numbered among the Saints.

Affectionately,



Provincial Superior.