

God Alone!

St. Ann's Provincialate,
Melamiyur,
16-10-2016

“And the ransomed of the Lord shall return and come to Zion with singing; everlasting joy shall be upon them and sorrow and sighing shall flee”(Isaiah: 35/10)



Dearest Sisters,

On the early morning of 11th October, as the bells of the angelus rolled on, calling the faithful to sing praises to the Triune God for the gift of a new born day, our dearest Sr. Denis received the summon from her creator God, to join the angelic hosts in heaven to sing glory to the living God. Her departure was silent, gentle and struggle free, that even Sister Jyothsna who was caring for her and helping her through the morning routine, did not perceive her passing away. Realizing that Sr. Denis had suddenly become unresponsive to the conversation, Sr. Jyothsna, called the superior, who immediately called for the doctor. After due examination, the doctor declared that Sister Denis has suffered a silent heart attack, minutes before. The news was shocking to the Sisters of the Community, who enjoyed her company till the previous night. Grief stricken, they gathered around the bed praying for the dear departed soul.

Sr. Denis Joseph was born on 30th January 1935, to Mr. Joseph and Mrs. Elizabeth Rathappilly, as the first of seven children. The child was christened Rose and grew up in a pious and devout environment. From her parents she inherited deep faith and religiosity that brought forth fruits of patience, piety, desire for prayer life, faithfulness in doing little things and adherence to God's will. After her High School studies, in 1956, Rose answered the call of God that beckoned her to the Congregation of the Sisters of St. Ann of Providence. She made her religious profession on 3rd January 1960, accepting the name, Sr. Denis. Observing her skill in handling students and teaching ability, Sister was sent to Secunderabad to do her Secondary Grade training, which paved the way to continue her mission as a teacher in Vijayawada, Bolarum, Nileswar, and Secunderabad. In 1985, while in Secunderabad, as a teacher, she was diagnosed with Carcinoma and underwent operation. This was a cross that she was destined to carry till the end of her life. Living the way of the cross in one's day to day life is not easy. It demands courage, faith, patience, endurance, discipline and self surrender. Sr. Denis braved this journey with her infirmity for 31 years. Notwithstanding the suffering and pain caused by the disease, Sister offered her service as Warden of St. Theresa's Degree College Hostel, Eluru from 1988-1990, as Sister-in- Charge of St. Ann's Convent, Nidadavolu(1991-97) and Sister-in-Charge of Clemenza Villa(1998-99). In the year 2000, Sister was transferred to Sacred Heart Convent Vijayawada, for rest and treatment. In 2004, was shifted back to Clemenza Villa to take charge of the College Canteen. In 2008, she was transferred to St. Ann's Convent Eluru, in-charge of the Aspirants and to render possible help in the house. Her health began to deteriorate faster as her ailment spread to the heart and lungs. To facilitate better treatment, Sister was shifted to the Community at Adayar, near the cancer Hospital. In June 2016, Sr. Denis

was taken to St. Antony's Convent, Gollapudi, where the Sisters of the Community offered her maximum care and love till the end.

Sr. Denis was purified in the crucible of suffering and she endured it patiently, trusting in the redeeming love of the Lord. During her long years of illness, She loved to spend much time before the Blessed Sacrament and desired that others also do the same. Sr. Denis cherished a strong sense of belongingness to the Congregation. She was an ardent vocation promoter and brought many vocations to our Institute. She would also encourage her candidates to remain true to their vocation in good spirit. As we express our deep gratitude to her for this special service to the congregation, we implore her to continue this work from heaven and send more vocations to our Institute.

The funeral mass was celebrated on 12th October, by Rev. Fr. Gabriel, the Vicar General of Vijayawada Diocese and was attended by a large number of Sisters and laity. Fr. Gabriel in his homily spoke of Sr. Denis thus, " we pay our loving tribute to Sr. Denis, who has lived her vocation worthily and has gained paradise as her deserving reward. She has left us a parting message that our life on earth be a continuous preparation to meet our destiny which is heaven."


Sr. Dhasnas, in her introductory words said " Dear Sr. Denis, we thank God for you and the tireless service you rendered to our congregation, especially to our Province and Community. You were always punctual and performed your given tasks with love, dedication and commitment. A STRICT AND LOVING PERSON WITH REGULAR OBSERVANCE OF RULES AND REGULATIONS. A good disciplinarian, but always mindful of the individual's needs. We will always remember your humane, friendly and gentle attitude towards persons."

I offer my heartfelt condolences to the bereaved members of Sr. Denis' Family, especially to her younger brother Jose, her Nephews-Prince and Bijo, who were present for the funeral. I also share, in spirit, the pain and grief of the companions of Sr. Denis who, I know, are deeply grieved by the loss of their loved one.

I express my sincere and whole hearted thanks to Sr. Francis Marie and the Sisters of St. Antony's Convent, Gollapudi, who took good care of Sister Denis with sisterly concern and affection. A special word of appreciation to the Sisters of the neighboring Communities of Gollapudi and Vijayawada, for their timely assistance and support to Sr. Francis Marie and Community in this time of grief.

Dearest Sisters, while we continue to offer suffrages for the soul of our dearest Sr. Denis, let us invoke the Divine mercy of God to grant her the reward of eternal Life in the heavenly Kingdom.

Yours prayerfully,



Sr. Theresa Cherian
Provincial Superior