

God Alone!

St. Ann's Provincialate  
Melamiyur  
24<sup>th</sup> August 2016

***“On the holy mountain, the Lord of hosts will make for all peoples a feast of rich food. He will swallow up death for ever, then the Lord God will wipe away the tears from all faces; the Lord in whom we have placed our hope, will grant us salvation”.***

***(Is 25: 6- 9).***



Dearest Sisters,

Like the dew on the mountain and a bubble in the fountain, our dearest Sr. Fidelis has literally vanished into an unknown land, where there is no sorrow, no pain; her spirit has ascended claiming the great reward which the Lord has promised to those who love Him.

Sister Fidelis breathed her last on a Friday, a day especially dedicated to the Sacred Heart, towards whom she had great devotion. We hope and pray that she will rise again on this beautiful day! “The path of the just is a shining light that shines more and more into the Perfect Day”, says the scriptures. Our times are in God’s hands. He who sets our span of years, watches from above, knows best to summon His children.

Her passing away was peaceful while all the Sisters of her community were present and praying and assisting her as best as they could. She yielded up her soul, gently and serenely to her Creator. At 8:00 a.m. she was fortified by the Sacrament of the sick which was administered by the Parish Priest, Rev. Fr. M. Balasamy on 19<sup>th</sup> August and the end came within a short time at 8:30 a.m.; and she gently slept in the Lord! Sister was undergoing pain and discomfort for a long time which could not be guessed as she did not complain about her illness at all. She was suffering from a persistent cough for several months, for which she was taking treatment from our dispensary.

On 29<sup>th</sup> July, she was taken to St. Ann’s Hospital, run by the Luzern Sisters. After having done several tests, endoscopy and Scan, the doctors advised the Sisters to take Sr. Fidelis to the City Cancer Hospital. After having done the C.T Scan and other tests, the doctor spread out his hands in regret saying that Sr. Fidelis was suffering from Cancer of the Liver which has already spread to the lungs, in an advanced stage and that nothing can be done to help her.

Day by day, Sr. Fidelis became pale and very weak and the Sisters did their best to make her as comfortable as possible. She was bone – tired and even then no complaint escaped her lips. On receiving the news of her illness, some of her family members visited her and bestowed on her much affection and care. Her health was fast deteriorating but the last sleep came abruptly and she passed from darkness to light in peace;

Sister Fidelis, who was given the name Celine at Baptism was born in Mangalore on 13<sup>th</sup> January 1935, to Mr. Raymond D'Sa and Mrs. Margaret D'Sa. She hailed from a family of eight, three brothers and five sisters, two of whom are religious Sisters. The family was rooted in Catholic faith and lived their life in fidelity to the teachings of the Church.

The belief that God has chosen her to share in His love urged Sr. Fidelis to accept His call to serve as a Sister of St. Ann, in witness of God's love in the world. She entered our Congregation on 21<sup>st</sup> January 1956, at Secunderabad, made her first vows on 1<sup>st</sup> January 1959 and spent 56 years as a loved member of this society.

Sr. Fidelis was a skillful needle-work teacher. Within the religious communities, she served as in-charge of the Technical Institute in various places – Eluru, Secunderabad, Vijayawada, Nidadavolu and Gollapudi. She was always a diligent religious, loyal and concerned for her sisters in the community- a quiet achiever. Sr. Fidelis was a person who was strict with herself, compassionate to the poor and a woman of few words. Those who knew her well would recognise under her serious appearance, an understanding, jovial and affectionate heart. She embraced the virtue of Charity to help all the poor without any distinction. Charity was her logo – through which she made many poor young girls and women to become self-reliant to face the world's challenges and enjoy a comfortable financial status. Wherever she was, she prepared beautiful Mass Vestments and other altar requirements. The priests of the surrounding parishes placed orders with her for Mass Vestments and she always obliged them.

She trained many poor girls at the locality to stitch Vestments, embroidery and all types of ladies garments. Many of them remember her with love and gratitude. Several of them came up in life and improved their social status to a considerable degree. She was kind and considerate towards the poor, extending to them material, moral and spiritual help which will surely be recorded in the 'Book of Life'.

Our dear Sister, moderated, chastened and elevated, presents a spectacle happily described as 'The Crowning Glory'. Her conflict is over, and the smoke of battle is cleared. She has met her Captain Spouse Christ face to face and will go Home to her Beloved, who will turn her dark night into a Glorious Day!

The Funeral Mass for Sr. Fidelis was held in the Convent Chapel of St. Anthony's, Gollapudi, which was concelebrated by eight priests and participated by good number of Sisters from the Communities of Andhra Pradesh, Central Province and from different Congregations. Mr. Stany D'Sa her brother and Mr. Lancy Sequeria her brother-in-law, who were present for the funeral, offered loving tribute to her on behalf of her dear ones, in the following words.

“Our dearest Sr. Fidelis,

Softly in the morning, you heard a gentle call,

You took the hand God offered you, and quietly left us all.

We miss your smile, your gentle ways,

We miss the things you used to say, and when old times we do recall,

It's then we miss you, most of all.”

(Stany, Mabel, Desmond, Darryl and the entire D'Sa family)

Sr. Balapushpa, who spoke the introductory words during the funeral mass, concluded thus, "Today we give thanks to God for the life of Sr. Fidelis, for the witness of her living this vocation faithfully. Through her goodness and service in the society, she has left indelible mark in the hearts of hundreds of poor young girls and given witness as a religious for 56 fruitful years."

I am deeply thankful to Sr. Francis Marie and all the Sisters of St. Anthony's Convent, Gollapudi, especially, the team of Sister Nurses, who took care of Sr. Fidelis with much concern and Sisterly affection. My Sincere thanks to all the Sisters of the nearby communities of Gollapudi and Vijayawada, who rendered maximum support to Sr. Francis Marie and the Sisters in these moments of sorrow. I express my heartfelt condolences to the bereaved members of Sr. Fidelis' family; and to Sr. Gracy D'Sa, her religious Sister, who is a member of the Sisters of Charity, at Mangalore.

Let us offer our prayers, sacrifices and works of mercy, for the departed soul, asking the heavenly hosts to grant our dearest Sister, a speedy entry into the eternal joy of heaven.

Yours lovingly



Sr. Theresa Cherian  
Provincial Superior