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“The righteous though they die early, will be at rest. Being perfected in a short time, they fulfilled long years; for their souls were pleasing to the Lord, therefore he took them quickly from the midst of wickedness.” Wis. 4:7, 13-14

Dearest Sisters,

On 24th July, 2014 at 12.45 the long struggle between life and death that Sr. Flavy confronted, came to an end when the Lord had compassion on her and called her to Himself. Though she had a great desire to serve the Lord in the healing ministry, He had his own plans for her to which she consented.

Sr. Flavy Freeda Tauro was born on 17th July 1980 to a pious couple Mr. Sylvestra Tauro and Mrs. Theresa Furtado in Madanthyar, Manglore. She hails from a big family of 6 brothers and one sister. Being the youngest of all the siblings she was fondly called ‘baby’. She was loved dearly and cared for by all her brothers. She met with a strong opposition from the family when she expressed her desire to join the Congregation. But her strong will power and determination prevailed and Sr. Flavy joined our Congregation in August, 1996 at Angelore in Mangalore as an aspirant. She entered the Postulancy on 22nd July, 1997 (at Jamnagar) and pronounced her first vows on 7th May, 2000 at Talegaon. She made her Perpetual Profession on 21st February, 2006 at Talegaon.

In this short span of her religious life, Sr. Flavy rendered her services as a teacher in the Communities of Rajnikhand, Bharuch and Ajgaon. She had an innocent smile that won her many friends. She shared her God given talents with the young and the old. She related freely to all and made people feel at home with her. Being an extrovert, she loved meeting and greeting people. Her humorous ways made others happy in her company. Sr. Flavy loved and enjoyed celebrations. She was very particular about cleanliness and worked hard to keep everything neat and tidy. Hence her companions would lovingly call her “Miss clean”. In fact she was a hard working person and handled the given responsibilities to the best of her ability. She was innovative and creative, too. She was straightforward and had no inhibitions of expressing her point of view. As a junior it was noted that she loved to take care of the sick.

She joined Holy Family Hospital, Bandra to do her GNM (General Nursing and Midwifery) in 2007. During her first year of nursing she developed pain and swelling in her joints and suffered from constant attacks of fever. After a number of investigations it was diagnosed that she was suffering from *Pulmonary Tuberculosis* and *Pleural Effusion* for which she was treated. As per the doctor’s advice she had to discontinue her nursing for a year and hence was sent to Mithapur for rest. On regaining her health she continued and completed her nursing at Holy Family Hospital, Bandra in 2010. During the bond period at the hospital she developed signs of weakness. The blood reports revealed low blood counts and anemia. On doing the bone marrow test it was discovered that she was suffering from *Aplastic anemia and Hypoplastic marrow with monosomy 7*. Sr. Flavy being young and enthusiastic about life, found it very difficult to accept this dreadful disease. Since she was a nurse she knew what it entailed. But being a woman of hope and trusting in the omnipotent God who was a Father to her she looked to the future with hope doing everything possible to regain her health.

In June 2012 she was sent as a nurse to Karunanjali, Talegaon (school for mentally challenged). Her zeal and fervor for the little ones encouraged her not only to serve their medical and educational needs but also to find sponsors for them. She had a special place in her heart for the poor. She would encourage the rich to share their God given resources with the poor.

The sickness however worsened and in April 2013 she was referred to Christian Medical College, Vellore for further analysis and treatment. Thanks to the goodness of Rev. Sr. Marietta D'Mello the Provincial Superior of South Province and Sr. Mercy Sebastian who helped us in making the necessary arrangements. Sr. Flavy underwent chemotherapy which had alarming side effects. The intensity of her pain was so much that often she would repeat that her purgatory was over. The prayers, care and love lavished on her by the Sisters and her own dear ones sustained her and equipped her to face the trials that came her way. Suffering led her to God.

On 13th June, 2013 she underwent Bone Marrow Transplant (BMT). The donor was her brother, Mr. Martin Tauro. She underwent this painful process with dreadful consequences, with the intention of being healed as she had a great desire to serve the little ones especially the sick. In September, 2013 she was discharged from the hospital in a stable condition. She was sent to St. Ann's Convent, Talgaon for further follow-up with CMC, Vellore. For a few months her health seemed to be improving. Sr. Flavy believed that the Lord had worked a miracle. Filled with gratitude to God she wrote letters to all who contributed towards this healing, thanking them profusely. Unfortunately this joy did not last long for in December the symptoms of her sickness returned and in January, 2014 she was diagnosed with **Acute Myeloid Leukemia** and that gradually worsened her health day by day. The Doctors at CMC, Vellore who had done their best to restore her to health advised us that she would need frequent blood transfusions and this could be carried out in any Hospital. On 20th February, Sr. Flavy was shifted to Holy Family Hospital, Bandra for easy access of Hospital facility and nursing care. Since her health was deteriorating, she was in and out of the Hospital. Her family members were updated about her condition time to time. In the month of June her mother and sister had the privilege of being with her for a week. She received frequent visits from her close relatives in and around Mumbai. Sr. Flavy did not give up hope till the end. She fought the good fight, bravely. On 23rd July she frequently expressed her desire to be taken to Shanti Avedana, a place where the terminally ill cancer patients are admitted. The arrangements were made and she was shifted to Shanti Avedna, Bandra on 24th July. Just an hour later, on reaching this place she breathed her last at 12:45 pm in the presence of our Sisters and two of her brothers. Her mortal remains were brought to the Convent to bid her farewell and were then placed in the morgue awaiting the arrival of her dear ones.

The funeral service was held on 26th of July, 2014 at 16.00 at St. Andrews Church, Bandra, Mumbai. Fr. Ceaser D'Mello, the Parish Priest presided over the Eucharistic celebration along with 8 concelebrants. In his homily Fr. Ceaser highlighted that "suffering is seen by the author of the Book of Wisdom not as a sign of God's displeasure, but as an experience of purification. We can compare Sr. Flavy to a just person. Her soul is in the hand of God and no torment shall touch her because on this earth itself she underwent crucial suffering. As gold in the furnace, He tested her, and as a sacrificial offering he took her to Himself. God found her worthy for His Kingdom." The Church was packed to capacity with parishioners, our Sisters from Ajgaon, Talegaon, Sabarmati and Bharuch; Sr. Flavy's mother, brothers, sister, sisters-in-law, nieces, nephews and many of her close relatives; nursing companions and the staff of the Holy Family Hospital were present to pay their last homage to the one they loved so dearly.

My heart-felt gratitude and condolence to Sr. Hedwig, the Superior of St. Ann's Convent, Bandra for her selfless service to Sr. Flavy. She journeyed with Sr. Flavy through the ups and downs of the sickness right from the beginning. Her generous and loving service to the sick is commendable. A Big Thanks to the Community of Bandra for their availability and concern towards Sr. Flavy all through her sickness. I owe my gratitude to all the Sister Nurses of our Province and Sr. Sheela Amalraj of the South Province who without counting the cost assisted Sr. Flavy especially when she was in CMC Vellore. They joyfully

accepted the inconveniences and faced the tension and uncertainty bravely without any complaint. Sr. Ida Fernandes (Provincial Councillor) has been a great support to me in making decisions and arrangements for the substitution of Sister nurses at CMC, Vellore. She has even sacrificed her home-holidays in order to attend on Sr. Flavy. I thank Sr. Renvilda D'Souza (Provincial Councillor) for being with our Sisters at Bandra and the family members of Sr. Flavy on the day of the funeral. I thank the entire Province for the prayers offered for Sr. Flavy and the concern expressed in various ways in the last one year. We thank Fr. Ceaser the Parish priest and all the priests at St. Andrew's Church, Bandra for the love and spiritual assistance given to her.

Words are not sufficient enough to thank Sr. Marietta D'Mello, Provincial Superior of South Province, Sr. Mercy Sebastian and the Sisters of the Communities at Melamiyur for their frequent visits and prayerful support to Sr. Flavy during her hospitalization at Vellore and her stay at the Provincial House. I am extremely grateful to the Salesian Sisters, Sr. Amla Samla fma (Superior) and the Community, especially Sr. Elizabeth fma (Sister of Sr. Mercy Sebastian) for accommodating our Sisters in their Convent and for their hospitality. Sr. Flavy was always grateful to them for their solicitous care and prayers for her. We are fortunate to have experienced tangibly communion at the Inter – Province Level and at the Inter – Congregational Level. We praise God for this gift bestowed on us. Finally, I thank our dear Mother Ernestine and the General Council for following up regularly the precarious condition of Sr. Flavy with keen interest and prayerful support. I extend my heartfelt condolences and thanks to the mother, brothers, sister and the close relatives of Sr. Flavy for their support and assistance rendered during her illness both in person and in kind.

The youthful, enthusiastic, affectionate Sr. Flavy is now no more. We surely miss her. But I am sure her loving presence will follow us and her blessings will empower us to make choices in favour of the poor and the needy. Dearest Sisters let us be generous in offering our prayers and suffrages for Sr. Flavy and pray intensely for her bereaved dear ones who find it very difficult to accept this loss.

Finally, I wish to thank Sr. Ida Fernandes and Sr. Betty Pinto who have helped me in writing this circular. God bless you.

Yours Affectionately,

Sr. Eulazia Fernandes

Provincial Superior