

St. Ann's Provincialate
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Bolarum – 500 010
Secunderabad
Telangana



10th April 2017

“...Blessed is the one who comes in the name of the Lord...” (Mt. 21, 9)

Dearest Sisters,

The Lord blessed Sr. Jeannette by calling her to Himself on 9th April 2017. It was a very significant day – ‘Palm Sunday’ – Jesus’ glorious entry into Jerusalem. While Priests, Sisters and parishioners gathered in the morning in front of the convent at Sanquelim, before starting the procession with branches, Fr. Antony C.Ss.R, the Parish Priest of St. John of the Cross, Sanquelim, blessed and prayed over Sr. Jeannette who was seriously ill. After the Holy Eucharist the Sisters and some parishioners visited her. In their presence she breathed her last, a glorious entry into the new and everlasting Jerusalem.

Sr. Jeannette (VIRGINIA) D’Souza was born on 27th July 1936, at Cansa – Tivim, Goa, to Mr. Santan D’Souza and Mrs. Maria Pereira.

She entered the Novitiate on 21st June 1956, was Clothed in the Religious Habit on 1st January 1957 at Secunderabad, made her First Profession on 1st January 1959 and Perpetual Profession on 1st January 1965 at Secunderabad.

From 1959 to 1963 Sister was a Student in St. Ann’s Convent, Secunderabad. After her studies, she wove a beautiful and life-giving tapestry of Needle-work and Craft, particularly to the poor girls around her. She was always generous in rendering her services as Needle-work and Craft Teacher in different Communities of the Province: from 1964 to 1973 in Tivim community; in 1974 in Secunderabad; from 1975 to 1979 in Raichur; in 1980 to Moradabad; from 1981 to 1994 she was a Boarding Mistress at Raichur; from 1995 to 1996 she taught in the Kindergarten at Basaveshwarnagar; in 1997 she was completely in-charge of the kitchen at Raichur, 1998 to 2008 - Sanquelim; 2009 to 2010 - Tivim and 2011 till date, at Our Lady of Perpetual Help Convent, Sanquelim, in-charge of the Needle-work Centre.

Sister was a person of few words and gentle by nature, yet deep in her thinking and acting. She never wasted her time. Whenever free, she was found either working or praying. She had a great love for the Congregation and always took pride in being a Sister of St. Ann.

As a Boarding Mistress, she was kind, loving, helpful and firm when needed, so as to get the best from the boarders. She contributed much to the tailoring field through which she helped girls and young women to start their own tailoring centers. She always had a smile on her face, the best witness to God’s love. Avoiding occasions of gossip, she substituted with a word of appreciation for all.

In the beginning of February, Sr. Jeannette was treated for cold, fever and persistent cough. While recovering, on 27th February, she complained of breathlessness and epigastric pain. She was admitted into the hospital at Mapusa Romano. After examining her, the doctors stated that she was suffering from pleural effusion due to recurrent attack of tuberculosis of the lungs.

Once her acute symptoms were reduced, Sister was discharged from the hospital with strict advice to continue the tuberculosis drugs for 6-9 months. The Sisters of the Community and Mrs. Kusuma, the co-worker at the Needle-work Centre, took good care of Sr. Jeannette. Nevertheless on the first Friday, 7th April 2017, Sister lost the power of speech. The Doctor said that she was in a semi-conscious condition. She was administered the Sacrament of the Anointing of the Sick by Fr. Brian, the confessor of the Community. On 9th April 2017 at 9.30 a.m. Sr. Jeannette D’Souza passed away peacefully.

On 10th April 2017 at 10.00 a.m., the funeral mass was celebrated at Sanquelim Parish Church, by eight priests. The main celebrant, Fr Gabriel Lobo C.Ss.R, the former Parish Priest, deeply appreciated the services of Sr. Jeannette. He mentioned that she had been a great instrument in the hands of God. He enumerated her two outstanding virtues – a woman of faith and a woman of charity. The pleasant smile on her face assured every person whom she met that she was praying for them. Today many people remember her prayerful support. She also prepared herself well before retiring from work. With her motherly heart she touched every guest with a glass of water. This charitable hand extended to the young ladies whom she herself taught to meet their own expenses. Indirectly she has been a builder of many families. She lived her Vowed life to the full and always surrendered herself to the Will of God.

Here are some extracts of gratitude and interest by the Sisters:

Sr. Usharani Bandarupally, who was transferred to the community after her First Profession, expresses herself: *“With a grateful heart I thank you, dear Sr. Jeannette. I have lived with you for one year. It was a good experience. I always believed in my heart that you were a good teacher to me. I will never forget the Konkani language that you taught me and the lot of fun we had together.*

You were also my art and craft teacher; what beautiful flowers came into being creatively! So too with the needle and thread. You were a simple person with simple things. As you worked, so you lived. The work of the needle and thread is to settle matters. The people who came to you with a broken heart and their problems, always returned nourished by your consoling words and a blessing.

Jesus said, “Where two or three are gathered in my name I am there among them.” Yes, dear Sr. Jeannette, we felt the presence of God by spending hours together with the Lord in prayer. I came to know your great desire and zeal for prayer. Even in your illness, your sufferings taught me a good lesson: to be patient in times of pain and difficulty. Thank you dear Sr. Jeannette; I love you and I miss you.”

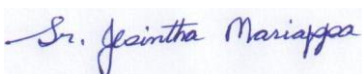
Another Sister had this to say: *“I had the joy of living with Sr. Jeannette, a simple and humble person. I lived with her only for five years during the early stages of my Religious life. She was ready to help me anytime. During her free time she was ever willing to teach the youngsters some needle-work like preparing table covers for their homes. She always surrendered herself to the Will of God. Sister, I will always keep you in my prayers. Remember me too...”*

I am grateful to Sr. Gracy Rodrigues, the Sister in-charge, and the Sisters of the Community, who have lavished such loving care upon Sr. Jeannette, especially in her sickness. Though they feel the loss of her, especially at Mass, at prayer, recreation and meals, yet they feel proud of her. I also thank the Sisters of the neighbouring Communities of Tivim, Quelossim and the Sisters from various Communities of the Province, who bid farewell to Sr. Jeannette. Special thanks to the Sisters of Ajsaon Community of Northern Province for being part of the Funeral Mass. My heartfelt thanks to Mrs. Kusum who remained close to her, specially in her last days, helping her in every way along with our sisters. My sincere gratitude also to the Parishioners who stood by our Sisters day and night praying for her soul and preparing the deceased body for public homage and finally for the funeral and burial.

I offer my heartfelt condolences to the bereaved family members of Sr. Jeannette, especially those who supported her during her ill-health and those who were present for her final rites.

Let us offer our prayers, sacrifices and suffrages for the speedy entry of her soul into the eternal bliss of our Triune God and be assured of having one more saint in heaven who will intercede for us.

Affectionately,



Provincial Superior