

*St. Ann's Provincialate
Simon Lane, Angelore
Mangalore – 575 002
Karnataka*



17th June, 2019

*"Surely goodness and loving kindness will follow me all the days of my life,
and I will dwell in the house of the LORD forever." – Psalm 23:6*

At the dawn of 7th June the first Friday of the month, Sacred Heart of Jesus, knocked at the door of Sr. Joan D'Souza, calling her back home to enjoy His loving company and continue to live forever in eternity.

Sr. Mary Joan D'Souza (Felicia) was born on 22nd August 1933 to Mr. Francis Xavier and Mrs. Eliza D'Souza at Karwar. She was third of 8 children. She grew up in a God fearing family and nurtured the desire to love God and belong to Him totally. She firmly believed that God has special purpose in her life. She decided to commit her entire life to the One worthy of all honor and praise. In June 1954 young Felicia left her parents and loved ones and took her journey to Secunderbad where she was warmly welcomed by the sisters of St. Ann. She remained attuned to her inner voice "let your light shine; excel in Good works". Bravely and wisely she made her total surrender and took the name Sr. Mary Joan D'Souza. The life of St. Joan of Arc, shown before her as a propelling force when she met with challenging situation in her dedicated Religious life.

She made her first Profession on 1st January, 1957 after which she continued her studies in Secunderabad. As a young junior sister she worked as Attendant in laboratory at St. Ann's School, Secunderabad from 1959 to 1964. Sr. Joan made her Perpetual Profession on 1st January, 1963.

Having realized the innate charism of teaching Sr. Joan was sent for training to Bangalore from 1964 to 1966. As a trained teacher she went to Tarnaka in the year 1966 where she was appointed as a teacher for 2 years.

Her total 'yes' to the call of God kept her ever ready and available to render her services wherever required. In the year 1968 from January to July Sr. Joan was appointed as headmistress of primary school in Wellington for a short period and then she was transferred to Secunderabad as in charge of St. Ann's Primary school till 1969. From 1969 to 1973 she was transferred to Roorkee to teach in the school.

In 1973 she was transferred to Kazipet as a teacher and remained there for 4 years. Bro. John Bosco, the student of Sr. Joan who is a religious in Teze, France says, "I had a very special attachment towards Sr. Joan. She was the most lovable of all my teachers. She always had good

and kind words to all her students. She used to say everyday in the class: 'My children, all girls are Angels and all boys are Saints'. These words are chiseled in my heart. 'The Angel' as she used to call others, she is one of them now. Thank you Dear Angel Joan for the gift of your life. I will miss you a lot personally".

Felix Peters one more student of Sr. Joan from St. Ann's High School Kazipet (now living in Pune with his family) who was present for the funeral service shares few words about his teacher – "As a young boy Sister Joan taught me English and Social Studies for 3 years. I met Sr. Joan last in February this year and it took me a while to explain things to her, I know she was slipping. I loved her gentle spirit. Her famous words were: 'all my boys are saints and my girls are angels'. She was determined to teach the less brilliant and make them the best. I can close my eyes and picture her beautiful hand writing on the black board... 45 years down the line. The care and love we learned in her class kept us in good stead for the rest of our lives. Sister Joan made a difference and we cherish her memory. May you rest in peace, good and faithful servant. We thank God for your life, Sister Joan and are grateful for the lives of all other Sisters past, present and to come of St Ann of Divine Providence. God is with us and has the final word. What is that word? Well, I think about Sr. Joan and I think of one word 'Love'. "Thank You, Sister..."

From 1978 – 1982 Sr. Joan worked as a teacher and Headmistress in Jamnagar. Her students fondly remember her and one of them Mrs. Manmeet expresses her experience in following words: "Sr. Joan was my principal at St. Ann's high School Jamnagar. The sweetest days of my life were School days. Even today I tell all my students about how well Sr. Joan looked after us, teaching us discipline, moral science, and extra-curricular activities. She used to pay personal attention to each event. Sr. Joan was a very sweet & soft person, ever smiling and loving. I had the privilege of attending Sr. Joan's funeral along with my husband on 8th June 2019. May her soul rest in peace and may she return to this world to continue her good work for more Children and Schools".

Sr. Joan worked in St. Anns High School, Tivim from 1982 to 1993 first as a teacher then as substitute Headmistress and finally as Headmistress. Teachers who worked with Sr. Joan at Tivim, Goa share their experience with her.

"Sr. Joan was truly one of a kind. She knew no limits for her compassionate deeds. She treated everyone with love, kindness and patience, qualities that described her approach to any situation. She went out of her way numerous times and visited her teachers' homes and was always a delight even though she often traveled on foot. She always worked hard to see that she ran a successful school and sought to provide the best quality of education and comfort. Sr. Joan shall live on in my memories even though her eyes are now closed. In gratitude I grieve the loss of a lovely enriching ever smiling personality". - Miss Eugenia D'souza

"I will always remember Sister Joan as a simple soul who had a very calm and austere nature. Her saree clad figure walking down the street to the various offices to ensure the best for the school and its teachers is a vivid memory. She will always remain in my thoughts and prayers for her simplicity and kind nature". - Mrs Vijaya Mohithe

Due to her ill health Sr. Joan was transferred to Talegaon in 1993 and she remained there for one year. Once again from 1994 - 2000 she was asked to go to Jamnagar to be the Animator of the community which she accepted with obedience and trust in God. From 2000 to 2003 Sr. Joan was transferred to Ajgaon as teacher for few months and then transferred to Talegaon due to ill health. From 2003 to 2005 she went to Bandra to render her services in Tabor Ashram for counseling the people and for rectification of mixed marriages. In 2005 she was transferred to Mithapur for one year.

As a skilled teacher Sr. Joan carried out her apostolate effectively and fruitfully. She had a special gift of tapping the innate talents in the students. She was known for her spirit of hard work and always had a smile of encouragement. She was a person who gave herself totally be it singing, creative writing, counseling, or helping in the house hold chores. She withstood all the challenges of life bravely and calmly. She was generous, thoughtful and sensitive to the feelings of others specially the community members. She possessed deep love for the poor as Sr. Joseph Mani from Karunanjali, Talegaon recalls an incident when Sr. Joan assisted the mobile eye clinic for the poor in the villages of Gujarat for a month. She was diligent, punctual and faithful to Religious observances. Happy and contented with what she had, she was pleased to spend maximum time before the Blessed Sacrament. She manifested God's love through little acts of kindness done to make another feel at home.

Sr. Doreen D'Souza, the Former Provincial of North Province thus speaks about Sr. Joan "As a Principal, she served as a quiet and committed sister. No doubt she was loved by the staff and the students for her simplicity of life and availability. Her life style was very frugal and she would not possess things more than needed. She identified herself with people afflicted, helpless and marginalized. She took pride in her labour and strived to give her very best. She was empathetic and warm hearted in public relationships. With her affectionate smile she endeared the parents, teachers and students and exercised her qualities of kindness, wit and humour. She was knowledgeable and as a result was able to construct a sound worldview. She was gentle, warm and good humoured person. She was gifted in vocabulary and loved to sing".

In 2006 she was transferred to Talegaon for rest and treatment. She had much time to spend with the Lord.

Sr. Joan had a fall in the month of February this year. She was admitted in Atharva hospital and was found to have a fracture of the femur. Bipolar hemi orthoplasty was done. Yet it was of little use as she was confined to bed thereafter. She endured all her suffering patiently offering it to the Lord. On 2nd June suddenly she took a turn for worse yet remained fluctuating in general condition. On 6th June there was decline in her condition and she breathed her last on 7th June, 2019 at 6.00 AM.

Funeral Rites were celebrated on 8th June, 2019 at 11.00 am in Mount Carmel Church, Talegaon. Rev. Fr. Peter was the main celebrant while Rev. Fr. Prasanna concelebrated the Holy Eucharist. While breaking the Word Fr. Prasanna spoke of Jesus as the Way, the truth and Life. Sr. Joan had followed this way of Jesus saying goodbye to the world and remained faithful to the end of

her life. From his personal experience he said that Sr. Joan always had a smiling face. The light of Jesus was shone on her face always. The secret of her happiness was Jesus and nobody else.

Her brother Constance whom she lovingly called Babu and her sisters Blessie, Mary, Violate and Lily with their children and other relatives were present to bid farewell to Sr. Joan. I convey my deep sense of sympathy for her bereaved family. I also thank the presence of parishioners and other friends.

We truly miss you Sr. Joan, an exemplary sister who dearly loved the congregation and upheld the Gospel values. We have another intercessor in heaven to send blessings on our Congregation. Thank you dear Sr. Joan and good bye.

I am pleased to thank Sr. Magline Gomes the Animator of the Community, the Sister-Nurses Sr. Mary Cyriac, Sr. Celine D'Souza and Sr. Punam and all the sisters of Talegaon community, Karunanjali community and Novitiate community for their tender care and affectionate services rendered to Sr. Joan during her physical ailment. I also thank all the sisters for their prayerful support for her. Let us offer our prayers and suffrages and live the values which Sr. Joan left behind for us to imitate. May she intercede for good and genuine vocations to our dear Congregation.

With much love and affection,

Sr. Charlotte Sequeira

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