

St. Ann's Provincialate
B – 43, Cariappa Road
Bolarum – 500 010
Secunderabad
Telangana

5th June, 2020

*“Behold, I stand at the door and knock;
if any one hears my voice and opens the door,
I will come in to him and eat with him, and he with me.”*

(Rev. 3, 20)



Dearest Sisters,

As she was eagerly awaiting the Lord, Sr. Maria Reine (MARCELLINE) Noronha heard His sweet voice accompanied by a knock at the door of her life on the first day of the TRIDUM – FOR THE SOLEMNITY OF PENTECOST, i.e., 28th May, 2020 at 3.05 p.m. in St. Ann's Novitiate, Bolarum. Sister's mortal remains were reverently taken in procession by the Sisters and Novices from the Novitiate to St. Ann's Home, Bolarum. While Sisters and Formees prayed constantly day and night, many of her well-wishers paid homage to her.

Sr. Maria Reine was, the sixth child in the family, born in Yercaud – Tamil Nadu, to a pious couple Victor Noronha and Daisy Rego on 20th April, 1938. Although, they hailed from Mangalore, she was born, bred, and educated in different places owing to her father's occupation. Presently her family members are settled in various parts of India and other countries. Among eight siblings, Sr. Reine and her younger brother, Fr. Prabhu S.J. consecrated their lives to God and only her eldest and youngest brothers are alive today.

Sr. Reine was determined to follow her Lord through the Religious life, despite the objections from her parents, specially her mother. With the help of her Aunt, she managed to slip away from the family to pursue the path of the Lord. She was a trained teacher, when she entered the Postulancy in 1961 in Secunderabad. After her religious clothing on 3rd January, 1962, she was sent to Turin, Italy for the Novitiate. Sr. Reine was professed on 1st January, 1964. For two years (1964-1966) she was in Via Giusti – Rome. In 1970 she made her Final Vows in Secunderabad.

Here is the itinerary of her 56 years' commitment, service and dedication to the Lord in His vineyard as an educator in our various Institutions.

1966	–	Tarnaka - Teacher
1979	–	Sacred Heart Convent, Vijayawada - Headmistress
1980	–	Secunderabad -Assistant Teacher
1981	–	Bolarum Convent - Headmistress
1986	–	Kanhangad, Kerala - Teacher
1989	–	Secunderabad - Teacher
1998	–	Secunderabad - In-charge of the Kindergarten

She was ever punctual and regular for all the Community activities, in spite of her busy schedule in the School. She attended all the services in the Church, including night vigils, in order to enhance her spiritual life. Amidst relentless and tireless work, she found time to read the Word of God, recite the Rosary and other devotions. She took keen interest in keeping the holy places and books neat and tidy both in the Church and Convent Chapel.

It was her added joy, to equip our Retreat House, St. Ann's Home, Bolarum with Bibles, Breviaries, and Hymn Books, well covered and labeled with needed captions. The Communities where she was placed benefitted and blessed by her thoughtfulness.

Perfection was her motto. Thousands and thousands of students were helped, through her very systematic, well planned, strict and basic training. Sr. Reine was an educator par excellence, not only for children but also teachers and parents. No one could escape her keen eye, regarding punctuality, regularity and cleanliness. Sr. Reine gave no importance to food, time and rest, when the responsibility was called for. She was the first to reach the School and last to leave the School. Besides her health care, all that bothered her was the well being and growth of the School.

She found happiness in giving and sharing her talents with others. She contributed a lot to bring out a phonetic CD in collaboration with Fr. Fidelis OCD. She took trouble and pleasure in going to all our Educational Institutions and particularly to Pet Basheerabad, to train the Kindergarten teachers, constantly for a few years. Many outside Institutions like, Religious, Diocese and Secular came to her to learn from her, the techniques of training the teachers and children, for a high standard. Her sole aim was to give her best, in order to gain an all-round development for the students.

Holidays were not on her list in her old age. Her thoughts always were ahead of what had to be done next to help her teachers, children and School. Age was not at all a barrier for Sr. Reine to give her service to the best of her capacity. Such was her zeal burning for the Lord and His people!

Her love for the poor was remarkable. Her hand was stretched out generously with essential things for the needy, especially for her supportive staff and other co-workers in the campus. As she received abundantly from the benefactors, she shared with those who were in need. Even just a few days before her death, she called some of our Sisters over the phone, asking them to share her academic books and clothes with others.

In her last Community, Novitiate, she helped the Novices in their formative movement. Despite her ill health, e.g. arthritis, she used go to Boys' School, Bolarum to guide the teachers in their teaching.

I am grateful to Sr. Leesamma, the Superior of the Novitiate Community, Sisters and Novices who accompanied Sr. Reine, especially in her last days. Sister was suffering from diabetes, underwent Angioplasty and stent placement for the blocks in the heart. She also suffered from Rheumatic acute pains, yet she was moving around with the help of others until she had a fall on 22nd May, 2020. Since then she was almost bedridden. On 28th she was unable to intake any food in the morning. Intravenous fluids were given as she was feeling very weak. In the afternoon after having lunch, she was feeling uneasy and gasping for breath. Her final call from the Master beckoned her with cardiac arrest and a

silent groan. Sisters of the Community and Novices witnessed her leaving the earth in order to remain in His abode forever, while they entrusted her soul to the Lord.

Here I wish to present the experience of a Newly-Professed Sister and a 2nd Year Novice who assisted her till the end: *“Her approach towards us, the Novices, was gentle and kind... It was an opportunity for us to take care of her in the Novitiate. We learnt so many good things from her, especially her will power, enduring spirit and cheerfulness even in suffering. Though she was a person highly respected by the parents, students...book publishers, many shop keepers and doctors; she became one with us with her simplicity...We are grateful to God for giving us this opportunity to serve our Sister, in the last stage of her life...”* (Sr. Theresa Stephen and Novice Sunitha Nayak)

In the beginning of the Funeral Mass, Sr. Joyce Thottathil in her Tribute to Sr. Reine, addressed her saying, *“May the angels and the saints welcome you in heaven, and lead you into the peace of God ”* (from liturgy for the dead). Fr. Bernard, the Episcopal Vicar, and three other priests celebrated the Holy Eucharist at 8.30 a.m. in St. Ann’s Home, Bolarum. In his homily, Fr. Bhaskar OFM, highlighted the two essential points from the Feast of Ascension, which lived by Sr. Reine: *“I know Sr. Reine for the past 8 years, since we began School in Ramnagar, Hyderabad... Sister invited me for the initiation of the Lower Kindergarten. Addressing the parents, boldly she said, ‘this is a Catholic Institution and I will teach children the ‘our Father’ prayer...if any of you has an objection, you can take your child and go out.’ I was shocked to hear her bold statement... She was really giving witness to the Risen Lord. In my number of times of meeting her personally she used to say, ‘Father, I must preach the Gospel of the Lord by my actions... By teaching my children, students, I witness to Jesus...”*

Many Sisters, Formees, Parishioners, parents, her ex-pupils were present for the Mass. At about 10.00 a.m. we accompanied her to Mettuguda Cemetery. Fr. Aloysius and Fr. V.K. Swamy blessed the grave. Some Priests, her benefactors, beneficiaries, parents and students gathered in the Cemetery and paid their last homage to her. At 11.00 a.m. her mortal remains were laid to rest in the grave.

I express my deep gratitude to Sr. Arokia Mary, the Superior of St. Ann’s Home, who graciously accepted to lay the body of Sr. Reine in her Community. Sr. Lidwin Anthony, the Superior of Secunderabad Community, who prepared the grave with the co-workers and Sr. Mary P.T. who helped to livestream the Funeral Mass online which was a great benefit to those who knew Sr. Reine. I am greatly indebted to all her family members, her brothers and nieces and nephews who were certainly very present here with her in their thought and spirit, despite the lockdown.

While we bid adieu to Sr. Reine, we are ever thankful to her, for her very person, for all what she has most willingly done for the Congregation, for her very life as a religious of 56 years. We pray that she may enjoy eternal bliss and intercede for us to remain faithful in our commitment to the Lord.

Affectionately,



Provincial Superior