

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



27th April 2018

*'People are like stained-glass windows. They sparkle and shine when the sun is out, but when the darkness sets in; their true beauty is revealed only if their light is from within' - -
Elizabeth Kubler Ross*

Dearest Sisters,

We were blest to behold the gentle light of Sr. Margarita who left us on 13th April, and now we have a memory of a life hidden in God! Through her cheerful face she radiated the peace and joy of the Risen Christ, while within she suffered with the Crucified Christ!

Sr. M. Margarita (PHILOMENA) Augustine was born on 30th January 1936, in Palluruthy, Kerala, to Mr. Augustine and Mrs. Mariamma. She entered the Novitiate on 1st July 1957, was Clothed on 3rd January 1958, made her First Profession on 3rd January 1961 and her Final Profession on 3rd January 1967 at Secunderabad. For the last 57 years she served in the following Communities mostly as a teacher – 1962 in Moradabad; 1974 in Kazipet in the Office as well as a Teacher; 1975 saw her in Tarnaka. Being one of those chosen to witness the Beatification of Mother Enrichetta, she was moved by the great dearth of Sisters in Italy. She generously offered her services and the sacrifice of her motherland and in the year 1979 she was sent to Italy, where she generously served the Lord in the little ones, and in other ways. In 1990 she returned to India and was transferred to the Community of Aruvankadu, and in 1993 to Secunderabad, to assist in the Boarding. Her missionary zeal impelled her once again to return to Italy in 1995, where she rendered her humble, self-sacrificing services, especially in the laundry, with great love and dedication, till October 2012.

Her deteriorating physical condition was a cause of concern as she had entered into an advanced state of Parkinson's and Alzheimer's, with atrophy of the right brain that made her lose orientation to place, time and person. Therefore, in 2012 she returned to India and remained in St. Ann's Home for treatment and rest. She was subject to active and passive tremors, which prevented her from taking normal food. However, the medication enabled her to move around to a fair degree for some time. Gradually she developed swelling of the knees due to her condition of chronic arthritis.

On 5th October 2017, she had a fall leading to a fracture of the hip bone. Due to her medical condition and advanced age, a surgical intervention was impossible but she was advised skin traction, rendering her bedridden for a long period of time. Day by day her condition grew worse. In spite of intensive care, she developed multiple bed sores owing to less blood circulation in the body, leading to Septicemia.

Sr. Arokia Mary, the Sister in-charge, assisted by Sr. Jacqueline, rendered assiduous care all through and Sr. Swetha D'Souza, who shared the room with her, diligently attended to her needs and the Sisters of the Community lovingly attended to her spiritual needs all through the time that she was confined to bed.

After a prolonged spell of suffering, she entered into a precarious condition, developing a high fever and was not able to respond to antibiotics. Therefore, on the 20th of March 2018, she was shifted to St. Ann's Hospital, Fatimanagar, where for around three weeks she was under acute medical care.

Sr. Nirmala and other Sister Nurses with the hospital staff diligently gave her the nursing care she needed. Sr. Pauline, the Sister in-charge took special care to administer Holy Communion daily to her. The Sisters of the community and those from our neighboring communities visited her and prayed with her.

However, her condition began to worsen and on 9th April 2018, the Feast of the Annunciation of the Lord, the Sacrament of Anointing of the Sick was administered. She gradually lost her consciousness and peacefully passed away at 5.10 p.m. on 13th April 2018.

The hallmark of our dear Sr. Margarita was her simplicity and humility, generosity in rendering a helping hand without even being asked. She was always polite and gentle, never showing signs of irritation in her interaction with others. Her cheerful disposition made her approachable; above all she seemed to have won a great victory over her tongue, in that, she would rarely allow an uncharitable word to escape from her lips. Her deep faith in God led her to a prayerful spirit, encouraging those in difficulty, with the words 'God will provide'.

During her long months of suffering she was always found smiling and never complaining. It seemed that the magnitude of her suffering was known only to her and to her Lord. Those who saw her, knew that she was suffering much, and were edified as she accepted her condition with serenity. With great sensitivity she accepted any assistance rendered to her and gratefully acknowledged it, because she felt convinced that all that was done to her was for her good.

When asked for words of advice, she said "let us live in love and live in unity". On another occasion when she was asked 'What would bring one happiness?' She said, 'If you are content with whatever you have, you are the happiest person'.

"Dear Sr. Margarita, now that you have won the race, remember us and help us to live life each day with serenity, accepting whatever God has in store for us. You knew that God was your Father, in word and in deed, and would provide for all our needs. Pray that we too be granted the grace to surrender our lives to Divine Providence, knowing that we can rest secure in the Hand of Our Loving Father.

The funeral was held in St. Ann's Home, Bolarum attended by Sisters, parishioners and Formees. In the Eucharist, Fr. Siluvai, SVD, mentioned that she had transformed her life (Music teacher that she was) into a melodious song, with the Lord Jesus as her Music Master.

Let us lovingly pray for the repose of her soul and for her speedy entry into heaven, that she may intercede for all the needs of our Congregation.

Sr. Jeaintha Mariappa

Provincial Superior