

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



*"Having been disciplined a little, they will receive a great good, because God tested them and found them worthy of Himself; like gold in the furnace. He tried them, and like a sacrificial burnt offering He accepted them". Wisdom3:5-6*

Dearest Sisters,

Having participated in the passion of Christ during this season of lent Sr. Maria Goretti entered into the abode of her loving Father on Sunday 15<sup>th</sup> March at Holy family Hospital, Bandra at 7.08 am.

Sr. Maria Goretti D'Souza whose maiden name was **MARIA PAULINA D'SOUZA** the first child of Mr. Felix Policarpo and Mrs. Luzinha was born in Mumbai, on 11<sup>th</sup> January 1935. She was the eldest of five siblings. The family had the joy of offering two of their daughters to God, in the Congregation of the Sisters of St. Ann. Sr. Maria Goretti made her First Profession on 1<sup>st</sup> January, 1955 and Perpetual Profession on 1<sup>st</sup> January, 1963.

Sr. Maria Goretti had done her technical training in tailoring, embroidery and knitting. She could turn anything into a beautiful piece of art with her fairy fingers. She had a special charm in preparing the Vestments, Altar linen and other Church articles. She rendered her loving service in the following communities:

1958 – St. Ann's Convent, Tivim as a Needlework teacher

1964 – St. Ann's Home for the Aged, Angelore as a Needlework teacher and assistant boarding mistress

1968 – St. Ann's Convent, Secunderabad as Needlework teacher and asst. boarding mistress

1974 – St. Ann's Convent, Tivim as Sister-in-charge of Technical centre

1977 – St. Ann's Convent, Tivim as in charge of the boarding

1978 – St. Ann's Convent, Eluru as College Hostel Warden

1979 – St. Ann's Convent, Moradabad as Needlework teacher

1980 – St. Mary's Convent, Raichur as Boarding Mistress

1983 – Our Lady of Perpetual Help Convent, Sanquelim as Needlework teacher

1989 – Our Lady of Perpetual Help Convent, Sanquelim as Sister-in-charge

1992 – Sabbatical year to rejuvenate her spiritual life

1993 – St. Ann's Convent, Tivim as Boarding Mistress

1994 – St. Ann's Convent, Tivim as Incharge of Technical centre

2004 – St. Ann's Home Bolarum

2009 - St. Ann's Convent, Quelossim

She utilized her tailoring skills to help the Novices to stitch 'Religious Habits' for their First Profession. Besides this she was good at flower making, artistic writing, gardening and excellent in cooking. Always being ready to share God-given talents with others, she has taught needle work, arts and craft, flower making to many sisters including Juniors and Novices. She had great concern for the poor and gave livelihood to many through her commercial Garment Designing and Making. Her compassionate heart reached out to many needy families of the places wherever she lived. They fondly remember her with gratitude for fulfilling their basic needs in times of necessity.

She followed the words of the Gospel "Be perfect as your Heavenly Father is perfect" (Mt. 6: 36) to the full as she sought and taught perfection in every little thing she did. The life and work of Sr. Maria Goretti inspired her younger sister Sr. Ubalda to follow her path and thus she too joined the Sisters of St. Ann. Sr. Ubalda was at her bedside during her agonizing moments praying for God's will in the life of her sister.

The outstanding virtue of Sr. Maria Goretti was kindness, duty consciousness, humour and hardwork. She used to spend considerable time in prayer and offer her daily prayers and sacrifices specially for the priests because she had a special preference for them as ministers of Christ. The sisters of the communities wherever she lived admired her being patient, enduring, loyal to the Congregation, assuming responsibilities, a support to the authorities, voracious reader, courageous and showed motherly care to those whom she encountered. She was a righteous person and self-reliant even in her sickness trying to minimize the inconveniences to others.

Mr. Mouvin Fernandes, a teacher from St. Ann's High School Quelossim expressed his sentiments: "Sr. Maria Goretti, the pioneer of Quelossim was always focused on the Mission of the Sisters in our village. As a teacher in St. Ann's, I had the privilege of interacting with and getting to know Sr. Goretti for three years. Sister would always encourage us to excel in our work. Sister also displayed concern for me as a person. Sr. Goretti asked me to pray a special rosary of thanksgiving and she also gave me a rosary. I was always assured of her prayers. And in the month of May, last year, our prayer was answered. I thank Sr. Goretti for praying for me and reminding me to be grateful for the blessings I received".

Mrs. Jean Mary Thomson, a student from Secunderabad speaking about Sr. Maria Goretti says: "Sr. Maria Goretti had a special place for me in her heart. She knew I was an orphan and hence played a Mother's role towards me. If she knew I did a mistake, she would not punish me but just open her eyes big and stare at me. I knew well something has happened. She would slowly walk to my bench and give me an electric shock called a 'PINCH'. Sr. Maria Goretti was my Needle Work teacher too when I was in 6<sup>th</sup> class. If I know how to threadle the needle, do neat hemming and sew on a machine it's all only because of my dear Sr. Goretti. She even taught me beautiful cross stitch. One day I went for my Needle Work Class and lo and behold - I forgot to take my needle, thread and the half stitched petticoat that she was teaching all of us. I sat hiding myself behind my friend and she walked up to me. One big eyed stare and then she asked me, where is your needle Work?. Sheepishly I answered – Sister, I forgot to bring it. 'Get out of the class, go sit under the Neem Tree and count the crows that fly about from one tree to the other' she said. All my friends had a hearty laugh at what she said. I stood up and hung my head low. I guess Sr. Goretti understood I was hurt. She walked back to her table brought another piece of cloth, thread and needle and gave it to me to start stitching."Here, She said, Start your

work now.". I looked at her and smiled. I was too smart to capture her heart. That's the beautiful spirit she had. She loved me so much that she often hid up snacks for me. What a Big Hearted lady. May her beautiful soul rest safely in the arms of Jesus. God Bless her soul. My condolences to Sr. Ubalda and the rest of her family and all the Sisters of St Ann. A loving Mother no more"

Sr. Marceline Rani, who lived with Sr. Maria Goretti in Tivim appreciated her in the following words: "Sr. Maria Goretti, was very committed and perfect in all her works. She loved our Institute very much, She wanted the younger sisters to do the same. She was very prayerful and straight forward. She was a real inspiration for me to live my religious life with commitment and great love for my Lord. She loved the people of Goa very much, everyone knew about her as she used to take keen interest in sharing the joys and sufferings of the people. She used to make it a point to visit the people personally in spite of her ill health. Often I used to see her sitting in the chapel and praying. She found all the consolation and comfort in the presence our Lord in the Blessed Sacrament".

Sr. Maria Goretti had a successful bypass surgery 15 years ago and she felt that her operation was a miracle because of the continuous intercession by the charismatic groups and other well-wishers. She was suffering from diabetic mellitus, hypertension which gradually resulted in chronic Kidney disease. In 2019 her condition became serious and Sr. Magline Gomes Animator of St. Ann's Convent, Talegaon had gone to take care of her in the hospital in Goa. As she became better she was brought to Talegaon in the month of October 2019 and again she had to be hospitalized in Holy Family Bandra for Pneumonia, heart failure and poor kidney function. Gradually she recovered and was back in Talegaon on 28<sup>th</sup> October. She began to share her talent of Arts and Craft to the Novices and Sisters till the first week of February. On 5<sup>th</sup> February, 2020 she had a fall and sustained fracture of the right lower rib. She was given medication from the Orthopedic which we had to withhold due to the itching rashes all over her body. On the third day she developed fever and was taken to Harneshwar hospital, Talegaon. The investigation report showed the blood count was found derailed and hemoglobin low. On 21<sup>st</sup> February, 2020 she was taken to Bandra and was admitted in the Holy Family Hospital. Her blood reports continued to worsen, kidney function became poorer. Sr. Celine who was at her side taking care of her said that before getting into unconsciousness she asked her to pray Psalm 50 and Divine Mercy Rosary and made the sign of the cross after which she was unconscious. She was on ventilator for the 15 days. There was no chance of recovery, her heart rate came down rapidly and she breathed her last on 15<sup>th</sup> March, 2020 at 7.08 am.

Hearing the sad demise of Sr. Maria Goretti, one of the Parishioner Mrs. Virginia Rodrigues from Quelossim expressed herself in these words "Sr. Maria Goretti was a great soul, who has left a wonderful legacy of inspirational thoughts and words behind. She was larger than life and she lived it to the fullest. Now that she is no longer in our midst, may all her beautiful memories be a blessing to you and your congregation. Please accept my deepest sympathy for losing a precious soul in St. Ann's family"

The funeral service was held on 16<sup>th</sup> March, 2020 at 11.00 am in the convent chapel, Talegaon. Fr. Prasanna, OCD, the Parish Priest celebrated the Holy Eucharist. During the homily Fr. Prasanna quoting the words of Henry David Thoreau "live your life, do your work, then take your hat" said that Sr. Maria Goretti followed the principle 'be human, be charistian, be religious in union with God'. He

shared his personal experience of Sr. Maria Goretti as he said 'Sister was ever grateful to God and each other. She shared great concern towards the Congregation and the Province'.

Sr. Maria Goretti's sister - Sr. Ubalda, sister in law - Eva, niece - Maria, nephew – Anthony, niece-in-law – Maria, other grand nieces and some of her friends and neighbours were present to bid farewell to her. I extend my heartfelt condolences to her brother Mr. Jeffrey D'Souza and other members of the bereaved family.

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. Maria Goretti during her last sojourn in this world. Special thanks to Sr. Shobha Alhat and the community of Bandra for their hospitality and availability during the hospitalization of Sr. Maria Goretti in Holy Family Hospital, Bandra. I also thank Sr. Bernice and the Sisters of Quelossim for their affectionate care towards Sr. Maria Goretti until she was taken to Talegaon for the treatment. Special thanks to all the sisters for their prayerful support for her.

Sr. Maria Goretti was always ready to ask pardon from others whom she hurt through her words or deeds. She requested the sisters to pray for her soul for God's mercy and forgiveness. She thanked the Sisters for everything that they have done for her.

These are the last words of Sr. Maria Goretti in her own hand writing:

*Dearest Sisters,  
I ask pardon from all I hurt. Requesting your  
Prayers for my soul for God's mercy and forgiveness.  
Thank you for every thing!  
Sr. Maria Goretti.*

Let us offer our prayers and suffrages and live the values which Sr. Maria Goretti 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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