

St. Ann's Provincialate,
Gollapudi P.O
Krishna District
Andhra Pradesh - 521 225
0866 - 2970933/ 2975033



4th June 2020

"More than the watchman waiting for the dawn to come, I await the Lord." (Ps 129 (130): 6)

Dearest Sisters,

Our dearest Sr. M. Nicoletta did wait, with intense longing from her bed of pain and suffering for the coming of the Lord Jesus her beloved spouse. Though her waiting was long, come he did, to take her home to himself on Wednesday 3rd June at 7.53 am. It was no coincidence, that she who was an ardent devotee of St. Joseph had the joy of being visited by him on a day specially dedicated to him.

Sr. M. Nicoletta (Teresamma Arlagadda) a native of Kethapally in Nalgonda District of Telangana was born on 27th March, 1943 to Mr. Thomas Arlagadda and Mrs. Showamma a pious and God-fearing couple. Of the four siblings, two girls and two boys, she was the eldest.

Sr. Nicoletta joined the Congregation of the Sisters of St. Ann at Secunderabad on 21st June 1963 at the age of twenty. After her clothing in 1964, she made her First Profession of Vows on 3rd January 1966 and Perpetual Profession on 2nd January 1973. She had the joy of celebrating her Silver Jubilee in 1991, Ruby Jubilee in 2006 and Golden Jubilee in 2016.

She was sent, after her First Profession to St. Theresa's Convent, Eluru to pursue her two-year teacher's training course. On having qualified herself in 1968, she was appointed as a teacher in the Elementary Section of the School in Eluru where she remained till 1980 and was then transferred to Nidadavole as a Teacher in the School.

In 1983 she was appointed as Headmistress of St. Anthony's Elementary School, Vijayawada.

From 1986 to 1989 she functioned as Animator of the Community of St. Theresa's Convent, Eluru.

From 1989 to 2000 she was again Headmistress of St. Anthony's Elementary School, Vijayawada.

From 2000 to 2012 she held the office of Assistant Warden at St. Ann's Convent, Eluru.

From 2012-2015 she was assistant financial administrator in the same Convent.

From June 2015 onwards due to her ill health she was on rest in St. Ann's Convent, Eluru.

Since February 2020 she was at St. Anthony's Convent, Gollapudi, since she needed very specialized medical attention and care and remained there till her last breath.

A very gentle and soft spoken person, Sr. Nicoletta was loved by all for her affectionate and affable ways- Sisters, staff, students, parents, workers, priests and Government officials. A dedicated and committed religious, prayer was her priority and God the Centre of her life. Her Chronic Bronchial Asthma and

wheezing left her with sleepless nights, still she would make every effort to be present for morning prayer and Mass much to the edification of all her Sisters. Her deep faith enabled her to surrender every moment of her life to the Providence of God and His designs for her.

Ever ready to lend a helping hand to those in need of her help, she always found herself in happy company of love and friendship. She made it the endeavour of her life, be it as a simple Sister, or as a teacher, or headmistress, or animator of the Community to deal with persons with love and respect giving them their due dignity as precious children of God. She was an able administrator and always encouraged her staff and students to be competitive and to participate in the various inter school activities and they brought laurels to the institution. She was an excellent and efficacious teacher. Here is what one of her students, now a priest in Austria has to say of dear Sr. Nicoletta:

“Sr. Nicoletta was my Headmistress when I studied in the 4th and 5th class in St. Anthony's School, Vijayawada. She was very encouraging and creative. With her encouragement I had participated in many science exhibitions and I felt confident to take up new things. She taught me how to pray. She used to communicate through songs and poems. Her innovative ideas amused me very much. She was a very strict disciplinarian at the same time very caring and kind. She taught us Catechism and she used to explain the parables in a very innovative way. The seed of faith in me was nourished by her teaching which led me eventually to become a good priest. Whenever I came from Austria I would make it a point to visit her just to hear her positive words to boost me. I am saddened to hear of the demise of dear Sister Nicoletta, May God reward her hard work by granting her eternal rest.

I offer today's Holy Mass for the repose of her soul. May she rest in peace.”(Fr. Suresh Meriga)

This is what Rev. Fr. Jose Pottayil, SSP the General Councillor has to share about his lived experiences.

“It was indeed with profound sorrow that I received the sad news of the passing away of Sr. Nicoletta this morning. May her soul rest in the peace and joy of the Lord whom she served faithfully and joyfully all her life. On behalf of all those whose life Sr Nicoletta has touched and transformed during her life by her gentleness and kindness, her motherly affection and sisterly love, and by the joyful witness of her consecrated life as a sister of St Ann, please accept my most sincere condolences and prayerful sympathies at her passing away from our midst.

I had the joy and privilege of associating myself with Sr. Nicoletta while she was the Superior at St. Theresa's Convent, Eluru and I was serving as the Parish Priest of St Theresa's parish, Eluru. Although that association lasted only for a period of three months as I was transferred to another community of ours, there was born a relationship between us of mutual respect, appreciation and admiration which lasted more than 35 years. As a young priest, I was really inspired by her simple but deep faith, her genuine love and care for me(us) priests and the simplicity of her life. I shall never forget her last words to me over the phone just about a few days ago: “Fr. Jose I am praying for you”. Sr. Nicoletta, thank you for your love and prayerful support all through my priestly life and ministry. May the Lord reward you amply for your unfailing fidelity to Him and your lifelong commitment to his people specially the poor, the needy and the suffering. May you rest in the peace and joy of the Risen Lord!”

Sr. Nicoletta who was an embodiment of devotion and dedication to duty, received a rude shock when she was diagnosed with Cancer of the breast. Shock soon led to total surrender of her life to Him who called her to existence. On 1st August 2013, she was admitted in the Good Samaritan Cancer Hospital at

Vangaygudem and underwent Mastectomy. After this she was given Chemo and Radio therapy and she was completely cured. From then onwards she was under medication and regular checkups. But none of these health concerns prevented her from living life to the full and giving of her best always.

From January 2020 onwards she was suffering from continuous Asthma and though in and out of the hospital she showed very little improvement. She was under medication of different kinds but it did not help her out. So on 20th February she was taken to a lung specialist who after all the tests were done found that her lungs were filled with fluid due to the spread of Cancer. The biopsy confirmed the recurrence of the cancer. Since she needed oxygen support and further nursing care, she was taken to Asha Hospital, Gollapudi, where she was taken care of round the clock with much love and concern. With the passage of time her breathing became more difficult. Her solid intake too had to be reduced.

Soon after my return from Eluru where I was held up for more than two months due to lock down, I visited her on 31st May and found her very weak. The nurse Sisters were constantly attending to her. On and off she would be uttering irrelevant things. It seemed that her brain too had got affected. On 2nd June in the morning since she took bad I went to see her along with Sr. Margaret Thiruvudula. The Parish Priest was called for and he prayed and blessed her. During the day she was restless and her niece Sr. Fatima Pavani was beside her. Her presence seemed to comfort her. Sr. Nicoletta was happy to see her loved ones through video and responded to them in syllables. She personally thanked the Sister nurses by name assisted by her niece.

As soon as I got the call at 7 am that she was sinking I rushed to her bedside where all the Sisters were assembled and were saying the prayers for the dying. This was my first experience to see someone dying and praise God it was a beautiful experience. She who was eagerly waiting for the bridegroom with lamp alight, bid goodbye to the world silently and serenely surrendered her beautiful soul to the Lord of her life at 7.53 am surrounded by her dear Sisters and beloved niece.

The funeral Mass attended by the Sisters, her relatives and friends was concelebrated at 3.30 pm in the Community Chapel, by the Parish Priest Fr. Stephen, the Vicar of the Diocese Fr. Gabriel and three other priests related to the departed soul. During the Homily, the qualities of such an exemplary life were highlighted by her cousin Fr. Joseph. Her mortal remains were accompanied to the Convent cemetery and laid to rest next to our other Sisters.

Dearest Sisters, I take this opportunity to express my sincere thanks to Sr. Rosy Kidengeth and every Sister of the Hospital Community, very specially our dear nurses for their care and concern extended to dearest Sr. Nicoletta. I also express my sincere condolences to the Sisters of the Community of St. Ann to which the dear departed belonged and to the bereaved members of her family especially to Sr. Fathima Pavani. While we thank God for making Sr. Nicoletta a blessing to so many people let us offer up our suffrages for her, asking her to intercede for the many needs of our Congregation.

Yours affectionately,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Sr. Ernestine Fernandes". The signature is written in a cursive style and is positioned above the typed name of the Provincial Superior.

Provincial Superior.