

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

22nd February, 2020

*“I am the resurrection and the life, those who believe in Me,
even though they die, will live” (Jn. 11: 25)*



Dearest Sisters,

The Risen Lord, Jesus Christ, who conquered death and rose to glory, fills our hearts with faith and hope to look beyond earthly life, therefore, all those who believe in Him, will live in Him forever. On 25th January, 2020, at 7.50 a.m. on the feast day of the Conversion of St. Paul, our Lord visited SR. VERONICA KENDAM. Stretching out His loving arms, He invited her to enter into His heavenly abode. Meeting the Lord on the way to Damascus, St. Paul could not turn back to his old ways; similarly, meeting the Lord in the morning in the Hospital, Sr. Veronica could not turn again to her earthly abode but only to a heavenly dwelling!

On the 20th to 24th January, 2020, I was in Fatimanagar for the Canonical Visit to two Communities – Hospital Community and Home for the Aged and Disabled. On the 23rd morning after the Eucharistic celebration, as I was getting ready to go to St. Ann's Home for the Aged and Disabled which is adjacent to the Hospital Community, we got the news from Sr. Japamala, the Animator of St. Ann's Home, Fatimanagar that Sr. Veronica Kendam complained of dizziness and breathlessness. Sr. Amala, the Provincial Councillor and Sr. Nirmala Pudota, the Administrator of the Hospital rushed to the place and found that her oxygen saturation was low and the blood sugar level alarmingly very high. At once she was admitted to our Hospital on the advice of the Physician to start her on an Insulin drip and oxygen. When I visited her in the evening, her condition was not very stable; her voice was very feeble. While encouraging her to get alright soon, I casually said that I would meet her in the Hospital itself. The following day i.e. 24th January, I met her in the Hospital, as she was waiting for me, free from the drip and oxygen mask. At the end of the meeting I prayed over her and advised her to have to check on her diet, which was the serious cause, for the declination of her good health. At about 10.00 p.m. two of the Community Sisters visited her and found her responding better. The Sister on night duty was by her side. At 1.00 a.m. on 25th January, her random blood glucose level shot above 400mg/dl, treatment started accordingly. In spite of this, around 5.00 a.m. Sister and Nurses on duty found her going into unconscious level. Her oxygen saturation was falling below 90% and her breathing rate was very low and shallow. Cardiopulmonary resuscitation was done to revive her. Since there was no improvement, she was rushed to the Rohini Multispeciality Hospital nearby. The Hospital staff did their maximum to revive her, but could not succeed, due to uncontrolled diabetes, obesity and underlying cardiac problem, leading to Cardiac arrest. She was declared dead by the doctors at 7.50 a.m.

Although she was on regular treatment for a right bundle branch block, constrictive lung disease, hypothyroidism, severe hypertension, and type 2 diabetes, it was a shock for us to accept her sudden demise. Just a couple of weeks before her death, Sr. Veronica Kendam lost her only Sister-in-law who was like a mother to her. She attended her funeral on 11th January, 2020, and returned on 19th. Since then, she was feeling very sick and her health condition was deteriorating continuously.

Sr. Veronica Kendam was the youngest daughter born to her God-fearing parents, Mr. Yagappa and Mrs. Rosamma on 25th February, 1953 at Uriurkuppam, Vellore, Tamilnadu. She was the Benjaminite of the large family, having one brother and seven sisters, of whom only three sisters are alive.

She joined the Congregation in 1974 in Bolarum. The following is her itinerary in the Congregation:

In 1974 Sr. Veronica Kendam made her entry into the Postulancy, in 1976 to the Novitiate at Bolarum and her First Profession in 1978. In July 1978 she was transferred to Fatimanagar for Community experience. In 1979 she did her Montessori training at St. Ann's Convent, Secunderabad. As a Junior Sister she opted for the mission. Therefore, in the month of May, 1980 she left for Rome to prepare herself for mission work. In July 1980 she was sent to the new Community at Cainta, Philippines as a Missionary. In 1985 she was nominated Finance Administrator of the Delegation and in 1986 she was transferred to the Community of Dama De Noche. In 1988, she was transferred to Cainta. After a period of four years, she was back between the Communities of Cainta and Dama De Noche. In 1992, she was transferred to the Community of Anda and in 1995 to the Community of Maddela as animator. In 1998, she was transferred to the Delegation House in New Manila, in 2000 to the Community of Anda where she served as Sister-in-charge. In 2001, she returned to her respective Province of Southern India.

Sr. Veronica Kendam spent almost 21 years as a missionary in the Philippines. Having great love for God that would take her to the extent of making difficult things possible, she worked with untiring spirit and helped in the growth of the young Philippine mission. She mastered their language and served in various capacities, as a young Sister becoming all things to all. As Manager of Catechism teachers she worked along with Parish Priests going to various Schools in the Philippines and training and supervising the study of Catechism. As Financial Administrator of the Philippines Delegation she helped in opening and furnishing new houses. As Animator of the Community she loved and cared for the Sisters and the people. She used to say, *"People loved me so much. Yes! I have experienced great generosity and the Providence of God wherever I went and served the God of Providence."*

Sisters in the Delegation of Philippines are grateful to God that she was part of the mission. Sr. Josephine E. Zamora, the Delegate Superior, expressed the voice of the Sisters, thus: *"...Being still a Junior Sister, and possessing great missionary zeal, she promptly embraced the Filipino culture and learned the local language well. She was once assigned as Community Superior to a far off Parish that could only be reached by boat from the mainland. Her love for the mission made her overcome the difficulties of the place, like scarcity of water, rough and dusty roads, and hot weather. She loved little children and was always willing to go to the barrios to teach Catechism in Public Schools. She was a very relational person, one who would easily make friends with the young and old. In particular, people still remember Sr. Veronica Kendam as the Sister who helped them deepen their faith*

in God and their devotion to Our Lady, as she was zealous in forming and animating the Legion of Mary wherever she was assigned.

She returned to India in May 2001. But she was not able to re-enter because of some problem with Documents. We felt her love for the Philippine Mission because she was always in communication... She sent messages of encouragement... We are grateful for her missionary life shared with the Filipino people, especially to us Sisters. Her legacy is written in our hearts."

Sr. Ubalda D'Souza, who worked with Sr. Veronica Kendam in Philippines, expresses her inner most feelings: *"I was at the Central Province hoping to meet Sr. Veronica Kendam. But the sudden and sad news of her death shocked me terribly for we were good friends. I lived with her for more than 5 years in the Philippines. She was a born missionary with all the qualities needed to work in remote and under-developed places. Poor people were the apple of her eye... She would face any challenge... Her presence brought joy and laughter. Young and old loved her company. Her love for the Church, dedicated services to our Congregation, love for the poor and missionary zeal is praise worthy! As a self-sacrificing missionary may God grant her eternal peace."*

Her zeal for the mission could not be suppressed. At the request of Mother Franceschina Milanese, the then Superior General, Sr. Veronica Kendam said 'yes' and came to Italy to be a missionary in 2002. She joined the Community of Laigueglia. From 2005 to 2016 she remained in the Community of Via Massena, Turin. There she underwent a knee transplantation surgery and also Thyroidectomy followed by an advanced course of radiation, as she had been diagnosed to have Carcinoma of the Thyroid. After her recovery she helped in the Kindergarten.

Here we have Mother Franceschina who witnessed the goodness of Sr. Veronica Kendam: *"I have known Sr. Veronica Kendam since my first visit to the Delegation of the Philippines and from then on, I admired her spirit of prayer, how cordial and open she was with the others with the capacity of teasing all, with due respect to her Superiors. I specially remember how much she suffered when she had to renounce entry into the Philippines because of the refusal of the Embassy to renew her Visa. And again I remember her "Yes, Mother, I'll come!" said with such generosity of heart when after a few months of her stay in India. I proposed her coming to Italy as a missionary. Her only difficulty was to learn Italian... When she was at Laigueglia, for the first three months she continued to be a true missionary, visiting the aged, the sick and animating a missionary group of volunteers to sustain the missions."*

In 2016, Sr. Veronica Kendam joined the Central Province. She was transferred to St. Ann's Convent, Mallapur where she was helping the Street Children of Shanthi Sadan. In 2017, she rendered her service in the Kindergarten and to the Boarding Children of St. Ann's Convent, Peddapalli. In 2018, she was transferred to St. Ann's Home for the Aged and Disabled, Fatimanagar where she served the inmates remaining there till date.

Sr. Veronica Kendam was a woman of great courage and deep faith. She was filled with the love of God which moved her to do wonderful things for His glory. With an ardent desire to be a missionary she entered religious life. The fact that she worked as a missionary for the past 35 years, i.e. 20 years in Philippines and 15 years in Italy, speaks volumes of her missionary zeal.

Her last few years spent in the Province, was a reflection of her faithfulness to God and love for the poor and needy. In spite of her constant illness, she never missed her Community prayers and the Holy Eucharist. She used her talents for the good of others, preparing rosaries, knitting shawls and mufflers and gifting them to others. Every week she would attract the inmates to her Catechism class and speak to them of Biblical stories with sweets in the rare! She would instruct them to be orderly and disciplined. Her desire was to die while she actively moved around doing things by herself. Accordingly, she did her personal work by herself, taught and helped the inmates till the day she fell sick. God has granted her desire and taken her to His heavenly abode in His time.

Some of her companions in Religious Life were present to bid her farewell. Sr. Joysee Thottathil, her companion, expresses her deep sorrow for losing her: *“I had a number of chances to listen to her after she returned to India. There was the celebration of our Ruby Jubilee in April 2018... She loved to visit houses, listen to their problems, catechizing them all the while. Sr. Veronica was ever ready to render any sort of help to those who approached her. May God reward her for bringing many people to the Almighty. We miss her a lot”*.

On the 26th evening the funeral Mass was celebrated. In the homily her Priest nephew Fr. Anthony Raj, the main Celebrant affirmed that *death is only a means to see God face to face. Through death, Sr. Veronica Kendam’s life has been changed. Death brings hope to live with God eternally*. Many of her family members – sisters, nieces and nephews, Sisters from Southern, Eastern and Western Provinces, Parishioners, LASA Members were present at the funeral rites. A very tearful adieu was bid to her mortal remains. On 27th at about 6.30 a.m., Fr. Joseph, another Priest nephew, who came from Spain, offered Holy Eucharist and her mortal remains were laid to rest in Fatimanagar Cemetery. I am grateful to the Sisters of the Community, Fatimanagar Hospital Community and the Students of both College and School of Nursing who took care of her, especially in her last agony and spent a lot of time in praying for her soul. I also extend my sincere thanks to all the family members, her sisters, nieces and nephews who remained two entire nights at the bed side of the body, praying continually.

*Dear Sr. Veronica, we love you and will continue with our supplications
that your beautiful soul rest in peace now and forever
and that your missionary zeal be with all of us
till the end of our earthly sojourn. Amen.*

Affectionately,



Provincial Superior