

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

7th February, 2021



" I will bless the Lord at all times; His praise shall continually be on my lips." (Ps 34 : 1)

Dearest Sisters,

With the certainty that the one who made of her life a continuous hymn of prayer, praise and thanksgiving, is now doing the same in her Father's House, we accept in faith the passing away of our dearest Sr. M. Belinda Kujur from her earthly home to her heavenly abode on 4th February 2021 at 19.10 pm. Having been confined to bed in these last few months and tried and purified in the crucible of suffering, we feel sure that she is already enjoying the beatific vision of her beloved spouse who found her ready to receive the crown He prepared for her.

Sr. Belinda Kujur (Mary Kujur) was born to God fearing and devout parents Mr. Thomas Kujur and Mrs. Mariam Toppo, on 2nd January 1947, at Kharwatoli in Jashpur District of Chhattisgarh. The youngest of seven children four brothers and three sisters, she grew up in an atmosphere of love and care not just of the members of her direct family alone but even her nephews and nieces had a special love and concern for her. Her frequent visits to her aunt who was working as a cook for our Sisters in Duldula, brought her in touch with them. Greatly edified and inspired by the lives of these Sisters, she decided to be part of our Religious Family.

She entered the Congregation of the Sisters of St. Ann, on 20th June 1967 and joined the Postulancy on 7th July, 1968 at Bolarum, was clothed on 9th June 1969 and made her First Profession on 9th June 1971 at Secunderabad. After completing her Juniorate in 1973 at Secunderabad, she was sent to Pathalgaon for the two years Teacher's Training Course. On completion of the same in 1975, she was sent for a year to Duldula as a teacher. In August 1976 she left for Rome for studies in Theology at the Pontifical Urban University. While there, she pronounced her Perpetual Vows on 28th August 1977. She returned to India in 1979 to begin her apostolate. Enlisted below are her various assignments which she accepted in great faith and carried out with utmost diligence, dedication and devotion.

June 1979 to June 1980—Roorkee - Headmistress of Hindi Medium School

July 1980 to May 1981—Jamnagar - Mistress of Aspirants

June 1981 to May 1984—Roorkee - Teacher

June 1984 to May 1985—Moradabad-Teacher

June 1985 to May 1987—Duldula- B. Ed Student in Bihar.

June 1987 to May 1990—Isanagar- Teacher

June 1990 to May 1991—Tivim - Teacher

June 1991 to May 1992—Talegaon Head-Mistress

June 1992 to May 2007—Isanagar - Teacher

June 2007 to May 2010—Isanagar Convent - Superior

June 2010 to May 2012—Milak Khanam- Superior

June 2012 to May 2013—Rampur - Superior

June 2013 to May 2014 - Talegaon - Karunanjali - Boarding Mistress

June 2014 to May 2019 - Sabarmati Superior

May 2019 Changed Province from Northern India to Eastern India

June 2019 transferred to Duldula - Boarding Mistress.

Dearest Sisters, permit me to make use of the touching testimonies I have received, to throw light on the life witness of this wonderful Sister of St. Ann, the Triune God was pleased to gift us with. Reading these, makes me regret not having had the opportunity to live with her for long and know her better. My knowledge of her is limited to only two encounters, one during my Canonical visit as Superior General and now as Provincial Superior after she joined our Province in 2019. She was, I can say, a saintly, simple, serene, soft spoken Sister.

I begin with the message I received from Sister Renvilda D'Souza and Sr. Rita Pinto from the Community of Sabarmati where she last was, before changing over to the Eastern Province. "Sr. Belinda was given the responsibility of an animator of the Community at Sabarmati, from June 2014 to May 2019. Even though it was a hard task, she obeyed and took up the task with a very good weapon. This weapon was not of violence but of prayer. She, through her powerful prayer maintained peace, love and joy in the Community, the School and all around. The prayer of the righteous is powerful and effective. Sr. Belinda was energetic through her prayers. She was the person who gathered the senior Sisters of the Community everyday without fail for the hour of adoration from 11.30 am. to 12.30 noon, praying for the needs of the Congregation and the Church. She depended on God totally and thus her co-operative nature, love for the people, interest in their progress made a difference. Her simple motherly approach to all the situations brought peace and joy all around.

The parents, students, teachers, co-workers all were happy with her affectionate approach. She did not hurt anyone by her words and actions. She was very understanding and concerned about the requirements of the Sisters in the Community. Her life was not a bed of roses but she took up the challenges very bravely and made herself useful to others. She embraced all the little ones who came to her in distress and she found solutions for their problems in prayer. She was always compassionate towards the sick, the poor and the needy. We at Sabarmati miss her but she always remains alive in our hearts with the spirit of prayer. Sr. Belinda we pray to you to bless us from above".

Death leaves a heartache no one can heal, love leaves a memory no one can steal. To complement the above, I present to you the experience of Preeti Shah a teacher of St. Ann's School, Sabarmati: "The news of the demise of Sr. Belinda came as a shock to us. With a saddened heart we pray for the loving soul of our former Manager Sister Belinda. We were fortunate to have her with us at St. Ann's School, Sabarmati for five years. Her simple nature and smiling face always brought soothing comfort to whoever she met with. Though being at the most authoritative position, she was always humble in her words as well as actions. I remember seeing her every morning being with the Kindergarten kids and cheerfully encouraging them to do well. The students were so fond of her that even while leaving they would wish to say "bye" to her personally. Her happy gestures were all that they longed for everyday. Sr. Belinda interacted with all the staff members individually and that touched our hearts immensely. Mrs. Reena, remembers her saying " Her interactions with us individually made me feel loved and thus motivated to keep doing my best." A teacher had got her hand fractured and Sr. Belinda would daily enquire of her well-being. Such a kind-hearted person was our beloved Sr. Belinda! She always kept us in her prayers. She was a constant source of warm support to us. Her compassionate presence in the celebrations made us all feel extremely cheerful. She was an embodiment of simplicity. Let us pray for our beloved Sr. Belinda who is "dwelling now in light yet ever near...."

Sr. Letitia D'Souza has this to say : " Sister Belinda, was a peace loving and calm person and would not allow herself to be disturbed easily. She was simple and hardworking and had great love for the poor. Had the capacity to endure sufferings silently even when her eyes would be full of tears. A person who would adjust to the reality before her. She would put in all the efforts in her given task. She was sent for theological studies to Rome with me, but unfortunately since she found it difficult to cope up, she returned to India after two years. She tried to find her strength in prayer during these difficult years of studies. Once when we visited a Church in Rome, she took a

candle from the box near the candle stand and began lighting it without dropping in any money as offering for it in the box kept for it. I slowly told her that we cannot light candles if we have not put in any money and she replied to me saying: "what money should I put, when I have given my whole life to God". Of course we didn't have any money with us in those days but such was her great abandonment and confidence in God who would understand her. Ever since I left for Rome for the work of the Constitutions, I did not get the opportunity to meet her again".

Death ends a life, but not a relationship. Recalling her happy days with dear Sr. Belinda, from the Community of Bharuch, Sr. Luigia Furtado communicates, "Sr. Belinda was one of the most cheerful and God fearing persons I came across, who loved the Word of God and transmitted the same to the students, teachers, parents and friends. By surrendering to God in silence, with humility and love every morning, she received inner energy and his bountiful blessings and graces for all her works of the day.

She was the source of inspiration, innovation, originality and resourcefulness to many. She utilized her unlimited potentialities with a definite goal and responsibility. Her work as a teacher did not end in just teaching and giving home-work but she made good human beings who could take up responsibility in the society dealing with different types of issues social, political as well as spiritual. She was an authentic and affectionate teacher who prepared her lessons with love and perfection. She was very motherly towards the students with her tenderness and simplicity of heart. The poor and weak students were given special attention by her without any complaint and fatigue. She was a spring of knowledge, a pure stream of wisdom who watered and refreshed the minds of the students. She trained the children in dramatics, singing, dance and above all in Catechism. Perfect items were put up on the stage dealing with moral and social issues which gave a clear idea of the current situation of the society in turmoil.

Her Catechism classes were superb. To her credit there are today, very many priests, Religious Sisters and Brothers to whom she had taught the Word of God with love and understanding and whom she inspired to follow Christ. She happened to tell a boy in the class while teaching about the Sacrament of Ordination. "When you become a priest you will give Communion first on my tongue". That boy is today in Rome doing his studies and will very soon be ordained.

I was fortunate to have this generous, gentle and affable Sister with me for twenty-one years who worked so hard to spread the fragrance of peace, love and joy all around. She was very humane in her dealings with the needy and the poor. She lived for the poor, worked for the poor and loved the poor in her life. I pray that God give her his reward which he has prepared for her from all Eternity".

Sr. Belinda was a highly diabetic, B.P. patient. On 28th May 2020, she suddenly took bad, unable to get up and walk. It was the sign of a paralytic stroke that affected the right side of her body. She was taken to Holy Cross Hospital, Kunkuri, and was kept in the ICU since her B.P. was very high. After two days she was brought back to the Convent and given country medicine and massage for a month. There was much improvement in her health. Without any support she was able to walk again. She was extremely happy praising God all the time. But unfortunately on 4th September 2020 she took bad again, her sugar went very high and she became helpless. On 5th September, she received the Sacrament of Anointing. Her people were informed about her condition and on 7th her nephew and nieces along with family came to see her. On 8th September she was once again taken to the same Holy Cross Hospital. The X-ray and ECG revealed swelling in the kidney and some irregularities in the functioning of her heart. This necessitated her being shifted, the next day 8th September, to Sankalp Hospital at Raipur. She remained there undergoing all the needed treatment till 18th September. Though not fully cured, according to the doctors advice, she was brought back to the Community on the 19th September where the medicine had to be continued. On 20th September her elder sister Calista a nurse by profession came to look after her. She was a great help and blessing for us. She remained with Sr. Belinda till her last breath.

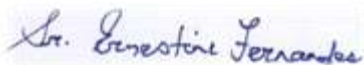
Sr. Belinda had a great fear of falling down and no amount of coaxing or advice or encouragement from any quarter could make her change her decision of leaving her bed. The best care and attention could not prevent her developing bed sores which refused to heal due to her high diabetes. Hence it was decided to shift her to the same Kunkuri Hospital on 22nd January 2021. Very slow improvement and other complications were observed. On 31st January the doctor informed that she needed blood transfusion. The Sisters in turn, together with her sister Calista stayed in the hospital seeing her grow weaker each day unable even to eat any solid or semi solid food. On 3rd February, came the shocking news that she had lost her speech and her condition was rapidly deteriorating. Noticing her condition, for the second time she was given the Sacrament of anointing on 4th afternoon at 4.00 pm. Sensing her end was drawing near, the doctor on her rounds told Sr. Bertha and her sister Calista to pray the mercy rosary loudly close to her ear for her to listen. As soon as they finished praying, Sr. Belinda gently breathed her last at 7.10 pm. Her body was kept in the mortuary till the next day 5th afternoon and the funeral fixed for 6th morning as Sisters Donata and Margaret who were actually travelling to visit her in hospital were to arrive late on 5th evening.

The funeral Mass at 10 am, on 6th February at the Parish Church, Duldula was concelebrated by Fr. Walter the Parish Priest and his two assistants and also Fr. Milan the Parish Priest of Sr. Belinda's hometown. Highlighting her prayerfulness, simplicity, human approach, her love to proclaim the Word of God and zeal for the Kingdom the main celebrant said these virtues though may seem simple are great in the sight of God. The Staff, Boarders, many parishioners, relatives young and old, of the dear departed, numbering around thirty, Sisters of our Communities of Tamnar and Ghargoda, Sr. Ashly Jose and Sr. Suman Kujur representing the North Province where Sr. Belinda spent the greater part of her life, all these participants filled the Church to capacity. After the Mass, her mortal remains were laid to rest in the Convent Cemetery next to five of our other Sisters buried there.

Dearest Sisters, while I take this opportunity to convey my sincere condolences to Sr. Bertha Toppo and Sisters of the Community of St. Mary's Duldula, who will truly miss their beloved Sister Belinda, I also wish to express my profound thanks to each of you dear Sisters, and in a particular way to Sr. Bertha and Hemlata, for your attentive care and loving concern extended to dearest Sr. Belinda in her moments of sickness and suffering. I also express my sincere condolences to the bereaved members of her family especially to Calista who was her ministering angel. May Jesus be your comfort, your confidence and courage.

To our dearest Mother Francesca, I owe a great debt of gratitude for her constant concern and frequent enquiries made, regarding the health of our dear Sister Belinda. Even on the eve of her death, that is on 3rd evening to be precise, Mother asked for the contact number of Belinda expressing her desire to speak and encourage her. On calling Sr. Hemlata to obtain the same, great was my shock to learn, Sr. Belinda had lost her speech that day. Even greater was my pain to break this news to Mother. Truly, too soon came her end. Seated at the station to see off Srs. Donata and Margaret, I received the shocking news from Sr. Bertha amidst the noise of the railway platform "Sr. Belinda is no more". We were speechless. May she who knew to withdraw and pray as Jesus did in the Gospel we read today (Mk 1:35) be an inspiration for us to be persons of prayer and praise at all times.

Yours affectionately,



Sr. Ernestine Fernandes

Provincial Superior