



St. Ann's Provincialate,
Melamiyur,
15th May, 2021

“You must be ready for the Son of Man is coming at an unexpected hour.” (Lk.12:35)

Dearest Sisters,

This above quoted Bible verse from St. Luke's Gospel appeared a reality before me on 10th May 2021 at 6.20 pm when the shocking news of the sudden passing away of our dearest Sr. Giusta Chacko was informed to me over the phone. We found it difficult to believe for a while because, the turn of events was so sudden and unexpected. Finally, we had to accept the fact that Sr. Guista suffered a massive heart attack and left us all in great shock and grief.

While enquiring about the circumstances that led to this sudden occurrence, the Sisters of the Community told me that Sr. Guista had lunch with the Community as usual at 12.30 pm. She spoke and related things with unusual enthusiasm for a longer time and then went to take her Siesta. At 3.15 pm, which is her regular time for a shower, Sr. Mary saw her going in to the bathing room. But she came out very soon and went to her room. Sr. Mary thought that she might have forgotten to take something. After 5 minutes, hearing a strange noise from her room, Sr. Mary Sebastian rushed to the spot and found Sr. Guista seated on the bed and gasping for breath. The Sisters were alerted and all rushed to her bedside. When they called out her name, she said “I am not able to breathe”. The ambulance was called immediately and Sister was shifted to Sanjeevani Hospital, Kanjangad, where the ventilator facility was available. When the ambulance reached the hospital, providentially there was just one bed available with ventilation facility and Sister was admitted there. Though the doctors attended to her as on emergency and tried their maximum with every possible alternative, her breathing continued to be very feeble and her tolerance of bi-level ventilation was inadequate. The oxygen level kept falling and pulse rate declining fast. Realising the seriousness of her condition, the Sisters called for the Priest and she was administered the Anointing of the sick in the hospital itself. Within half-an-hour of receiving the last Sacrament, at 6.20 pm, Sr. Giusta was gathered to the Lord's presence, filled with the glory of Easter. Sister was 79 years old.

Sr. Giusta Chacko had been suffering from Diabetes Mellitus and Accelerated Hypertension for which she had been on medication for many years. On 13th April 2018, in the Community of Manassery, Sister slipped and fell on the steps, suffering multiple fractures in the right thigh bone. After the operation, the bones were set right in the proper position and Sister was self-reliant. But the shock of the incident took away her courage to walk which she slowly overcame within a year and started moving about with walker. She was brought to Madonna Villa for rest and treatment where she recovered her health to a great extent. In June 2019, Sister Guista was transferred to the Community of Kanhangad at her request for a period of rest and relaxation.

Observing the course of life that Sr. Giusta followed during the past few months, it gives us an indication that she was ready for this sudden departure and had been preparing for it. In the month of January 2021, Sister made a special request to permit her to go for her home holidays in February, for a longer duration. This request was granted and she spent two months with her family members, celebrated Easter with them and returned to the Community on 9th April. The few times that I contacted her after her return, she had no complaints of being sick. Therefore, it is hard to believe that our Sister is no more with us.

Sr. Giusta Chacko (maiden name – Aleyamma) was born on 3rd July 1942, to devoted and God-fearing parents, Mr. Chacko and Thresiamma Padipurakkal as their eldest of 8 children. She has five brothers and two Sisters. Aleyamma joined the Sisters of St. Ann in Nileshtar, Kerala, at a

tender age of 19. She made her First Profession in 1965 at Secunderabad, assuming the name Sr. Giusta. Perceiving in her certain inborn qualities for teaching, her Superiors encouraged her to concentrate on the teaching mission and was sent for Montessori training and later, in the course of time, she upgraded herself with B. A. and B. Ed. Degrees.

Remaining true to the Spirit of our Venerable Founder Carlo Tancredi whose main focus was the pedagogy of the heart, Sr. Giusta took keen interest in inculcating good Christian values in students. In her teaching career, she made herself totally available to the all-round development of the person, giving individual attention and guiding them along the way to reach their life's goal. Of the 56 years of her religious life, almost 40 years she spent for the cause of education, rendering service in different States and various Communities, which is evidenced through a quick glance at the road map of her apostolate.

1965 – January, began the teaching career at St. Ann's, Secunderabad, Kindergarten Section

1968 – July, she was transferred to Eluru as teacher in St. Theresa's School

1970 – to Roorkee as teacher

1974 – to Wellington, Aruvankadu, as teacher

1977 – to Kazipet, in-charge of KG section

1978 – to Eluru, St. Theresa's School as teacher

1979 – to Kanhangad, as teacher

1981 – to Kazipet, as teacher

1982 – to St. Anthony's Convent, Vijayawada, teacher

1988 – to Bagalpur, as teacher

1989 – to St. Ann's Convent, Nidadavolu, as Headmistress

2000 – to Ayoor, as Sister-in-charge

2005 – to Manassery, as teacher

2009 – to Kannanalore, in-charge of Primary school

2010 – to Manassery retired from teaching and for rest

2018 – to Madonna Villa, Melamiyur for rest and treatment

2019 – till date in Kanhangad, Kerala for rest and medical aid.

Teaching was her passion and Sr. Giusta was generous and willing to avail herself to work anywhere for the cause of education. Her service was not limited to the academic field alone. She was regular in teaching Catechism, conducting prayer meetings and was actively involved in parish activities.

Sr. Giusta is fondly remembered as a loving and friendly person, with a calm and composed demeanour. She had a special way of enquiring about the welfare of others, with a well-meaning heart that would put the other at ease. She was a woman of few words, spoken only when necessary. She cherished deep faith in God and an unswerving confidence in the power of prayer, the result of which was evident in her disciplined life style, religious observances and love for the poor and needy. While in the community of Ayoor, Sister used to regularly visit the Home where the unwanted elderly persons were sheltered and offer them the possible help.

Thus having completed her earthly mission, Sr. Giusta made a swift departure to her eternal home for which she was personally prepared. The funeral mass was con-celebrated by His Lordship Rt. Rev. Dr. Alex Vadakumthala, Bishop of Kannur Diocese and three other priests on 12th May at 9.00 am. The Sisters of the Community of Kanhangad, Nileshwar and Thalipparambu were present along with the family members of Sr. Giusta who had come from her home town. After the Holy Mass and prayer of Office for the dead, the mortal remains was taken to the Parish Cemetery and laid to rest beside the graves of our Sisters.

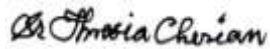
I take this opportunity to extend my heartfelt condolences to the beloved family members of Sr. Giusta, specially, her brothers Mr. Joseph, Mr. Martin James and religious Sister Cecil, whom I had been contacting and all those who made it to come for the funeral. I thank them for their support and cooperation to carry out the funeral service in a smooth and befitting way.

At this moment, I remember with a thankful heart, beloved Mother Francesca Sarcia and the General Council who were close to us, giving strength and moral support through their prayers and consoling words, to tide through these agonising moments. My sincere gratitude is due to Sr. Mary Sebastian and the Sisters of Kanhangad Community for being alert and attentive in doing all that they could to help Sister in her last moments.

I owe a deep sense of gratitude to His Lordship Bishop Alex Vadakumthala, Bishop of Kannur Diocese, who, braving the Covid scare and the lock down blues, undertook the two hours journey to celebrate the Holy Mass for our Sister. I also thank the Parish Priest Rev. Fr. Thomson, who was a great support to our Sisters in these moments of need. I am deeply obliged to the Sisters of Nileshtar and Thalipparambu Communities for their availability to render the needed help to our Sisters of Kanhangad. With a thankful heart, I appreciate the solidarity and concern of the Provincial Superiors of our Indian Provinces, other Province and Delegation Superiors and all our Sisters who through messages and mails shared in our sorrow and grief. My special and whole hearted thanks to my Council members and the Sisters of the Southern province, for being united with us in prayer.

Let us generously offer our prayers and suffrages for the departed soul of Sr. Giusta Chacko that she who has been called by the Lord may be rewarded with the crown of eternal life.

Yours lovingly,



Sr. Theresa Cherian