



BORN TO NEW LIFE

SISTER JOHANNA RADO, MPF



Sister Johanna Rado, 91, entered eternal life on Monday, August 8, 2016, in Saint Joseph Hall at Villa Walsh after a brave and difficult struggle in her last months.

Although born in Dunkirk, New York, the family moved to New Brunswick, New Jersey. This is where Sister Johanna later joined the Religious Teachers Filippini, February 2, 1944. She received the religious habit on August 27, 1944, and made her final religious profession on August 31, 1947. Sister Johanna studied at Seton Hall University where she received both her Bachelor and Masters Degrees. Her fields of study included both elementary and secondary education as well as business administration.

Education was near and dear to Sister Johanna's heart. She taught in the elementary schools in the Archdioceses of Newark and New York, and the Dioceses of Hartford, Connecticut and Paterson and Camden, New Jersey. Sister Johanna treasured her years as a teacher and the skills and values she promoted in this role were more widely reinforced when she assumed the role of principal in the following schools: Holy Spirit Pequannock, New Jersey, and Sacred Heart School, Clifton, New Jersey. She formed children and mentored teachers. Her dedication to Catholic Education and her achievement of excellence in these positions is the legacy she leaves behind.

Sister Johanna also served as bursar for the Province of Saint Lucy from 1966-1972 and as a pastoral minister at the parishes of Saint Margaret of Scotland, Morristown, Saint Peter, Merchantville, and Saint Joseph, Hammonton.

In her final years of retirement, Sister Johanna returned to Holy Spirit School, Pequannock, New Jersey. Though on a lesser scale, she continued to engage in teaching and sharing her administrative experience until her health began to fail in 2014. She remained involved and reached out to the young and the old.

Father John Tarantino, former administrator at Holy Spirit Parish, presided at the blessing of Sister Johanna's body and spoke so tenderly of his personal admiration for Sister Johanna and highlighted the good she accomplished. Father Al Lampron, former pastor at Holy Spirit Spirit, was the celebrant and homilist at the Mass of Christian Burial. In his homily Father Al capitalized on the significance of Sister Johanna's smile and the many ways it spoke to the people with whom she ministered. Father stated that a smile is an act of mercy and Sister Johanna had a transforming smile that centered in God. It spoke of her humility, her compassion, and reflected that she lived in the presence of Christ. Her smile was contagious and radiated her graciousness, concern and deep faith and commitment to Christ. She was a true community member and lover of Catholic Education, and a woman of determination. In conclusion, Father reminded each of us that mercy opens hearts and encouraged the assembly to renew our commitment to be the face of the Father's mercy to others.

Sister Ascenza was honored to speak on behalf of Sister Johanna. She began by acknowledging Sister Helen who tenderly assisted Sister Johanna these last two years and literally became her day and night sentinel while Sister Johanna coped with her waning condition in the hospital, the rehab, and Saint Joseph Hall these last months. Nothing was too much for Sister Helen when it came to caring for her beloved sister. (She received a thunderous applause!)

"Today this chapel is enveloped in grief, but it is also wrapped in a gift of love and thanksgiving. How good that Sister Johanna could be so loved that sadness and tears become the vehicle to best express how Sister Johanna has touched our lives!"

In the midst of our sorrow, we shift gears and take a few moments to rejoice, rejoice because the Almighty has done great things for Sister Johanna. Her life is one of blessing to the Church, to family and to this community. We come to give thanks! Sister Ascenza then spoke of the many ways God blessed Sister Johanna and the ways her life blessed others.

“Sister Johanna, your life exuded love and thanksgiving. A person filled with gratitude and love makes it worth the journey. Today we celebrate your journey. Our joy, love and gratitude for your life’s blessings are much stronger and deeper than the grief we carry. Yes, we rejoice because the Almighty has done great things in you and through you. Rest in peace, beloved sister in Christ.”