



Sister Catherine Macaulay

Entered eternal life on December 8, 2016

Sister Catherine Macaulay (Sr. Francis Bernadette) led a colorful life. Usually that phrase connotes a kind of behavior – but in Catherine’s case color-full speaks of all the colors with which she surrounded herself and shared with others. Her art, and especially her crafts, contained all the colors of the rainbow. Her skeins of wool were knitted or crocheted into all kinds of gifts for families and friends. She spent a number of years here at the Villa teaching other retirees how to work intricate designs for afghans, sweaters or doilies. She kept herself busy and at the same time showed her great love for her family, friends and students. And when she could no longer weave her magic, her leftover yarn was donated to add color to the lives of the immigrant women at Josephine’s Place in Elizabeth and the Women’s Place in Passaic.

Born in Jersey City in 1925, daughter of John and Delia Macaulay, Catherine had been a Sister of Charity for 72 years. During that time she was a teacher – always a teacher – of little children, big children and older Sisters of Charity. She spent time among green lawns and colorful houses of suburban New Jersey parishes and the muted colors of city buildings against a blue sky in Newark and Jersey City. Color was always a part of Catherine’s life.

Catherine’s devotion to her family was a constant. One of my conversations with her concerned making an afghan for a baby yet to be born. She was concerned that she have enough wool from the same lot so that it would be exactly the same shade of white. She was very particular about color – and about her family. She loved all of you and was always pleased to be invited to join in your family parties – whatever the occasion and no matter how difficult it was for her to travel. Catherine suffered from many physical limitations but despite that, until fairly recently, she kept herself occupied making gifts for others. In this way she was a true Sister of Charity always striving towards Boundless Charity.

To all who have cared for Catherine during these final years of her life at St. Anne Villa we will always be grateful. Her last years here were made so much more comfortable thanks to you. To all who mourn her passing from this life we offer our prayers and sympathy. To Catherine we say “thank you”. Thank you for 72 years of commitment to the mission of the Sisters of Charity. You now join a legion of Sisters of Charity who have preceded you into eternal life where you will intercede for us who continue the mission – to spread God’s love throughout the world.

As we move through the Advent season – a season of hope and longing for the coming of God once more into our lives, we celebrate two important feasts of Mary – Mother of Jesus. Last Thursday, the day that Catherine found her hope and longing fulfilled was the feast of the Immaculate Conception – honoring Mary, conceived without sin – Patroness of the United States. Yesterday, we celebrated the feast of Our Lady of Guadalupe, colorful patroness of the Americas. What joy Catherine must have encountered in heaven as she arrived to share in the joy of those feasts. The entrance antiphon for Our Lady of Guadalupe tells us “A great sign appeared in the sky, a woman clothed with the sun, with the moon under her feet and on her head a crown of 12 stars,” glowing with the brightness of all the colors of the spectrum. This is the woman, mother of us all, who is sure to have welcomed Catherine to her heavenly reward for a lifetime of committed service to others.

Catherine, may the rainbow of color, symbolizing God's covenant promise of love and mercy for all humankind, surround you, guide you, and fill you with peace and joy forevermore.
Amen.

Sister Mary Canavan