



## Sister Jean Young

Entered eternal life on October 20, 2017

Jean loved to be outside; she was a walker. It was her daily exercise and her primary means of transportation. In the early days she strolled in Lincoln Park and later she travelled the streets of downtown Jersey City. In all kinds of weather, she walked.

In her early years, Sister Jean was a wonderful English, Business and Religious Studies instructor in Jersey City at: St. Mary's High, St. Aloysius High and the Academy of Saint Aloysius. She enjoyed the classroom experience as well as the extracurricular activities in which her students participated. She was an avid basketball fan!

Jean was a peaceful person, a great listener. She enjoyed exchanging stories around the kitchen table at Saint Bridget Convent, preferring to hear from others over telling her own. Jean was a keen observer of all that happened at Saint Bridgets and...she liked to write. So, years later, at the Villa, she collected her notes and journals and typed her memories onto her computer. She then persuaded the administrator and her councilor to 'publish' the booklets which she proudly distributed to friends and family. (There is a copy in our archives if you would like this keepsake).

Our daughter Adele remembers Jean fondly; they had a special bond, despite the huge gap in age. As a child she called her 'JeanYoung' believing that was her FIRST name. One day, little Adele asked 'JeanYoung' why she always sat by herself in the last bench of the chapel. Jean responded: "I like to have conversations with God." From that day forward Adele referred to 'JeanYoung' as the "real nun" in the house. (So much for the rest of us at St. Bridgets!)

In truth, Jean was/is, a "real nun", a Sister of Charity to the core; a blessing in our Congregation. I quote from George Sand: "Guard well within yourself that treasure, KINDNESS. Know how to give without hesitation... how to lose without regret how to acquire without meanness." Jean practiced kindness daily, without hesitation. She accepted people as they were, non-judgmental in her interactions.

One of the highlights of Jean's many years in ministry was her time spent as pastoral associate with Father Hugh Fitzgerald, pastor of Saint Michael's Church, Jersey City. She wore many hats in that position and loved every minute, including assisting with the sheltering and the schooling of young Vietnamese boys who lived in the former convent. She was a vibrant member of that parish, dedicated to the neighborhood people and they, in turn, embraced her. Even when illness slowed her down she continued to serve enthusiastically: the recent immigrants, the homeless, the hungry.

Jean was fond of country music; the lyrics spoke to her. Along those lines she loved horses and horse racing. In healthier times, when her brother Charles came to visit, one of their favorite stops was Monmouth Race track where a \$2.00 bet was thoughtfully placed on each race.

Her family was a great source of joy and support: sisters, Mary & Rita brother Charles, nieces and nephews. She so loved all of you and kept up-to-date about your comings and goings. Her days in the Villa were punctuated by your visits and phone calls. Rita came daily to chat and play cards. Yes, she spoke of you often, lovingly, and treasured your time together.

Jean, you struggled patiently over these years. . .but your disease did not take away your spirit or your peace. Your struggles are now behind you. Please pray for us!

I'll close with Jean's own words, written a few years ago in anticipation of this moment, today:

“When off I go with eyes shut tight. Be not saddened by my flight.  
You've helped me have such a good time here. And look what's waiting for  
me there. Surprise me Lord, as only you can. When my time comes, hold  
my hand. But let me keep my head in the sand, until I'm safely in your  
Land.”

Jean, you have reached God's Land. Once again you are walking, along the pathways of heaven. Enjoy! Know that we love you. Rest in peace.

Sister Mary Anne Rattigan