



Sister Joan Granville

Entered eternal life on May 22, 2018

These readings, selected for Sister Joan Granville's Liturgy of Resurrection, are rich and weave a consistent message. Each speaks of God's faithfulness; God's presence with us always – and in all ways – in good times and difficult ones. We learn from these passages that God's love is constant.

I selected a few lines as examples:

- a) Revelation declares: 21:3 “Behold, God's dwelling is with humankind – God will dwell with them...God will always be with them.”
- b) In John 15:9 Jesus promises, “As the Father loves me, so I also love you. Remain in my love.”
- c) Person praying Psalms 23 responds, 23:4 “I fear no harm for you are at my side.”
- d) Finally, through Isaiah, God speaks – 43:1b “Fear not...I have called you by name; you are mine.”

I begin with a few snapshots of Joan from family lore.

- A leader – in charge when parents were out!
- Took piano lessons at the Academy of St. Elizabeth (first family contact with campus). Joan admitted not very proficient with the piano, unlike Kevin with the trombone and Betsy excelling on the piano (as we will learn).
- Joan often piloted the family boat.
- People were surprised when Joan decided to enter the Sisters of Charity, but she was determined to do it.
- As some of us know very well, Joan spoke the truth of a situation; this was not always welcome.
- My favorite: there was much piano playing and singing in the Granville home. One time, (it is not clear why) Joan added thumb tacks to the pieces of the piano that hit the strings – the effect? A more “honkey tonk” sound on the family piano!
- And there are other stories – some to be shared this afternoon; some later this evening.

Ministry; Living the Mission

After a brief foray into St. Mary's in Jersey City, Joan found her lifelong passion in healthcare ministry, within and without healthcare institutions. (Sister Rosemary already named the places.).

Much of Joan's life in healthcare ministry took place far from Convent Station, Joan's family's home base as well as the Congregation's. She began in healthcare under Sister Ellen Patricia at St. Elizabeth's in Elizabeth, reincarnated today as part of Trinitas Health.

Then with a Sister from a different Congregation, Joan founded Professional Healthcare Services which served the rural poor in seven counties near Rome, Georgia where she served for more than ten years. Subsequently Joan ministered at our sponsored Good Samaritan Hospital in Suffern, NY, at Mercy Health Center in Manhattan, Kansas, and finally at our St. Raphael's in New Haven, CT.

Early on she earned a master's degree in Healthcare Administration at St. Louis Missouri, again at a distance. (Those of us who have spent significant time away know the pros and cons of distance).

Joan did experience some difficult times, perhaps none so long or so isolating as with the encroaching cancer. We know that especially these last years – several years – were difficult.

“Blueberry”, a special feline, was a huge comfort to Joan as her illness took over more and more of her life. Well before coming home to New Jersey, Joan was sicker than most of us realized. But Joan did not hide within

the isolation for long. She depended on friends in Connecticut, especially Lucy Sirico (in Europe this week) and visits, calls from family and other friends. As she always did when pressed, Joan reached out to friends in New Jersey and family. And she was embraced and embraced us.

It was difficult for Joan to move to New Jersey and the Villa because of what it meant about her life ending. But in the several months she lived at the Villa, most often “she rose to the occasion” – visits from Villa Sisters, staff, friends – including some new ones, and family.

When Joan moved to Pat’s home and with what Pat facilitated she rallied for a while – at several levels. Again friends, and very specially Joan’s family, were very often present.

I note this is the second sibling loss for this generation of Granville’s: Bill in 1998 and now Joan twenty years later.

Bea and Paul, Kevin and Julie (now caretakers of “Blueberry”), Cathy and Ray, Betsy — Each of you have blessed Joan in a special, intense way these months. You each have meant so much to her.

Throughout her healthcare ministry Joan bore witness to God’s healing presence. Joan’s rich life holds out hope for all of us that God will make God’s self know to others through our lives, our loves and our ministries.

In the name of the Sisters of Charity and, I presume to say, for Joan’s family, I thank those who witnessed God’s love to Joan by their presence with her and their caring; friends, the nurses and aid staff at the Villa, at Pat’s, the aides, especially Sybil, the Hospice nurses and aides and ever present friends: Pat, Lucy, Theresa.

Joan, although we are sad at losing you from us here, we rejoice that your long journey with pain is complete; is ended; is over.

Joan live now with God whose love was enduring throughout your life and continues still.

I return to an opening line:

God speaks again through Isaiah – “Fear not...I have called you by name, (Joan) you are mine.

God bless you Joan. And Joan, please bless us.

Amen

Sister Marilyn Thie