

Born to New Life



Sister Josephine Ruggieri, MPF

Sister Josephine Ruggieri, MPF, 88, died peacefully on Wednesday, December 25, 2019, in the St. Joseph Hall Infirmary at Villa Walsh, Morristown, New Jersey.

“The Lord is good to those who wait. Sister Josephine waited 88 years to see God whom she loved so much and on Christmas morning he showed her how much He

loved her by taking her home,” remarked Father Ron Sordillo as celebrant and homilist for the Mass.

Born in New Haven, Connecticut, in 1931, Sister Josephine entered the Religious Teachers Filippini in 1949. She received the habit in 1950 and made her religious profession in 1953. Sister Josephine received an Associates of Arts Degree in Elementary Education and was certified in the Montessori Method by St. Nicholas and Eastern Connecticut State College. Her natural aptitude for nursing was strengthened by courses in First Aid, as she was inclined to care for others, especially children.

Father Ron clearly recounted in his homily, *“God’s loving kindness and compassion lived in the heart of Sister Josephine. She laid down her life to walk in the very ways of God, especially in the many schools and places she was missioned.”* As an early childhood teacher, Sister Josephine served in Our Lady of Mt. Virgin, New Brunswick, St. Joseph, East Orange, Holy Trinity, Long Branch, and Our Lady of Sorrows, Jersey City, New Jersey. She was also missioned in Our Lady of Mt. Carmel, Schenectady, New York, as well as in Our Lady of Mt. Carmel, Pittston, and Purification of BVM, Ellwood City, Pennsylvania. She will long be remembered for her untiring service in St. Anthony and St. Joseph, Bristol, and Sacred Heart, Stamford, Connecticut. Sister Pietrina Mazzola, of happy memory, once wrote, *“Sister Josephine was dubbed the ‘sweetheart of Stamford.’ The people saw only beauty and graciousness in her and even when she left that city, the parishioners communicated with her for many years. She had a tender spot for the sick, and found it no chore to walk from the convent to the hospital to visit parishioners, bringing comfort and consolation to those in distress, and praying for them. Sister Josephine was also lovable and gracious with the Sisters with whom she lived.”*

Unable to attend the funeral, Sister Margaret Franzese offered additional testimony to the guilelessness of Sister Josephine, *“Sister Josephine would spend long periods of time daily in prayer before the Blessed Sacrament. Her dedication to prayer, community, and ministry in the primary grades not only impressed me as a young sister, but gave me wonderful example. Sister Josephine’s dedicated life touched many lives. It is in the humble service and being present to each other that we learn what our Lord Jesus came to teach us.”*

Following her many years of active ministry, Sister Josephine retired to St. Joseph Hall Infirmary in 2011, where she spent several prayerful years as a kind and quiet presence among the sisters. Her thoughtful ways and generous heart will not be forgotten.