

Sister Janet Lehmann, SC

Entered eternal life on September 4, 2022



We come today to remember and celebrate the life of Sister Janet Lehmann, a Sister of Charity for 62 years and a woman whose life was one of loving service to so many.

The three readings today offer insights into how Janet lived her life.

The Micah reading is a perfect one for it tells us that in our life journey we are called to act justly, love tenderly, and walk humbly with our God. I believe that Janet did that throughout her life. I have known Janet for 65 years. We were in the Prep School together and she is a year behind me in community. Janet served as a Councilor with me in leadership for eight years from 2003-2011.

The reading from St. Paul tells us that we walk by faith. Janet was a faith-filled person who relied on God's Providence throughout her life.

The Gospel reading from St. Luke is one well known to every Sister of Charity because it our mission statement as written in our Constitution, *Toward Boundless Charity*. And I quote, "Jesus Christ came "to bring the good news to the poor....to proclaim release to the captives and recovery of sight to the blind, to let the oppressed go free, to proclaim the year of the Lord's favor." The mission of the Sisters of Charity of Saint Elizabeth is to proclaim and live this Gospel of Jesus Christ." Janet was faithful to this mission throughout her life living it through several different ministries.

Janet served at both All Souls Hospital in Morristown and St. Joseph's in Paterson. She had received a MSN from St. Louis University and returned to St. Joseph's after full-time study and was a Clinical Specialist in Cardio-Vascular Nursing there. Later on, she served on the Board of Trustees for St. Joseph's and chaired the Ethics Committee there.

Janet was both an excellent nurse and nurse educator. She combined the ministries of healthcare and education for many years serving as an Instructor in Nursing at Seton Hall University, as Professor and Chair of the Department of Nursing at the College of Saint Elizabeth (now Saint Elizabeth University) and as Dean of Nursing and Professor at the University of Notre Dame School of Nursing in Jacmel, Haiti. While at the College of Saint Elizabeth she received her doctorate in Nursing Research from New York University.

Janet was the youngest of four children born to Anton and Sophie Lehmann. There were Anthony, Veronica, Joseph and Janet. They all predeceased her. Family meant everything to Janet. She was close to her siblings, and her nieces and nephews. We are so glad that Christine, Joe and Karen's daughter, and Danny and his wife Kathy, and his brother, Joe, Veronica's sons, could be with us today. Other family members are joining us via livestreaming.

Janet was a compassionate caregiver. For several years while studying at Seton Hall, she lived with her mother in Bloomfield caring for her. When her sister Veronica was not well, she would schedule trips to Cape Cod to spend some time with her at the nursing home, and when her niece Nancy, Ruth and Tony's daughter, died a number of years ago, she was so attentive to her family caring for her three grand nieces and her niece's husband. This past July she traveled to Oklahoma for the funeral of her brother Joe.

A life changing experience for her was her time in 2012 as a volunteer in Haiti at the House of Presence in Duval Roche. That led Janet to accept a position at the University of Notre Dame School of Nursing in Jacmel where she ministered for six years full-time. During that time, she developed a relationship with the Trinitas School of Nursing and the nursing program at the College of Saint Elizabeth so that her students in Haiti could benefit from their expertise. One summer she was able to bring a cohort of nursing students up for a two -week

immersion experience at Trinitas. Because of COVID and some other health issues, Janet returned here to Convent in March 2020, but continued to do whatever she could for that program from here.

So many people were helped by her. I would be remiss if I did not mention Berylson and the care and mentoring she has given him over these years. We are so glad that he could be with us here today. He is presently in his first year of college at St. Vincent's in Latrobe, PA. Janet wanted so much for him to have this opportunity for a full four-year college experience. Berylson graduated from St. Benedict's Academy in Newark and completed two years at Essex County Community College. Martine, a nursing student of Janet's, is also with us today. She was able to receive care at St. Joseph's Hospital in Paterson through Janet's efforts and it was a lifesaving intervention.

Janet had wonderful friendships with many people, but I want to note her long-time friendships with Sister Janet McLoughlin whom she entered with and Sister Marie Russo. She loved spending time with them – trips to the shore, rides in the country, or a movie or a meal out – all were appreciated. She was a member of the Motherhouse community for 39 years. She loved her room on the 5th floor Convent wing and valued her friendships with Sister Connie Tanski and Sister Elena Colicelli who lived there too.

Janet's religious name was Sister Therese Maria and she had great devotion to St. Therese of Lisieux. There is a phrase from the writings of St. Therese that I often reflect on in prayer and I quote, "Whatever be the character of life or its unexpected events, to the heart that loves, all is well". When I received the call about Janet's unexpected death on Sunday, that came to mind for me. I believe that Janet died peacefully and that all is well. St. Therese's Little Way is characterized by simplicity, humility, and Charity, the three virtues that we as Sisters of Charity claim as Vincentian virtues. Another quote of St. Therese says, "Let us love since our heart is made for nothing else". Janet's heart embraced so many. I was blessed to call her friend and sister. I will miss her gentle manner, her wonderful smile, her laugh and her generous heart.

May you rest in peace, Janet, your memory will live on.

Sister Maureen Shaughnessy, SC