

Remembering



James Marien Dyer, CSJ

April 28, 1945 – August 5, 2017

On April 28, 1945, June Amelia Scheuermann of Wheatland, California, and James Dominic Dyer of Butte, Montana, welcomed their first child, a daughter. They named her Doreen. Three years later, on the exact same day, a son, James, was born and the family was complete. They lived in Oakdale, California, where Doreen and her brother were born and of those days and subsequent ones in San Francisco, Doreen would remember, "My parents were really family-oriented and very close. I remember going somewhere together every summer. Back then, families spent more time together, we would play cards and go camping. We had a real good time." This closeness of family was so strong, it lasted all her life. Doreen attended St. Emydius Elementary School and Star of the Sea Academy in San Francisco. The

school was small, about 300, and they were very close knit. While not an athlete herself, Doreen became a life-long, ardent fan of the Giants and the Forty-Niners.

Doreen "sort of knew" as early as the sixth grade that she wanted to be a nun. She credited her father as the first to answer her call to religious life, saying to one of the sisters at St. Emydius, "Move over, here she comes". It was not surprising, then, when she announced to her family that she wanted to be a sister. At eighteen, Doreen entered the Sisters of St. Joseph on September 9, 1963, and received the habit and her religious name, Sister James Marien, on August 6, 1964. After two years, she made temporary profession on August 6, 1966 followed by final profession five years later on July 24, 1971,

Ministry for Sister James Marien was entirely in education and she taught or administered on every level. Elementary schools included St Lawrence Martyr in Redondo Beach, St. Joseph in Kennewick, Washington and at St. Francis of Assisi in Concord. She served in secondary education at Carondelet High School in Concord and in higher education at Mount St. Mary's University in Los Angeles. James spoke highly and remembered positively all of her missions. She often talked about "the good times and the challenging times" seeming to balance her experiences as the years went on. James spent 26 years at the Mount from 1975 to 2001. She served as Director of Student Activities and Director of Residence at both Chalon and Doheny Campuses. She was an instructor in History while taking on additional roles over the years as Advisor, Coordinator of Graduation Activities, Director of Summer School and a member of the Committee on Staff Affairs. Twice, in 1977 and 2001, she was the recipient of the Faculty of the Year Award.

In 2001, James was appointed Principal of Carondelet High School in Concord, California. A new President/Principal model of administration had been adopted for the school and she was to minister as the first Principal under the new system. She served for two terms and in 2007 took a well-deserved sabbatical. In 2008, she became Principal at St. Francis School in Concord, a role she kept until her death on August 5, 2017. Sister James Marien was known for her humor and quick wit. She was able to "calm a storm" by interjecting a few words that put things in perspective and often brought a smile to both sides of an issue. Mount students remember her

as a wonderful history teacher, as someone who could include trivia and humor in her presentations and keep their attention. Of herself and her ministry, James would say, "I love teaching but I try to change my jokes once in a while to keep it fresh."

In recent years, James suffered from serious asthma, requiring constant use of oxygen. The tank accompanied her everywhere as she continued her ministry at St. Francis School, her frequent visits to her family in San Francisco, and her relationships with sisters and friends. On August first, James Marien went for a routine cataract procedure.

She was accompanied by her good friend, Sister Anne Eugene Metcalf. Unexpected complications followed the surgery and James lapsed into a coma, never to be roused. Surrounded by her family and sisters, James responded to her call one more time and returned to her loving God. Rest in peace, James.

~ Written by
Sister Adrienne Clare Pereira CSJ

Remember that
when you leave this earth,
you can take with you nothing
that you have received –
Only what you have given:

A full heart,
enriched by
honest service,
love,
sacrifice
And
courage.

~ St Francis of Assisi

