

Remembering



Sister Jeanne Therese Haskell, CSJ

February 23, 1927 ~ October 2, 2016

Patricia Ann Haskell was born in San Francisco on Feb. 23, 1927. Her parents were George Gilbert Haskell and Mabel T. Lewis. Her brothers include Bill Haskell, George Haskell, and she considered Jim Wobensmith and Father Carl Keathing, S.J., to be like brothers. Her father, George was Catholic, Mabel was Jewish. When Patricia was five years old her mother died. Patricia and her brother then went to live with a Portuguese family that lived on the same street.

In Jeanne's own words: "Following my mother's death, my brother and I were cared for by a wonderfully generous Portugese family, the Josephs. They were like family to us, as we had rented from them at one time." Jeanne continued, "At nine years of age, after my father's death, my brother and I moved from the Joseph's to an extended family, the Wobensmiths. I grew up with many foster brothers, including Carl Keathing, who was later to

become a Jesuit priest."

As a child Jeanne was sickly, and perhaps required special care. She attended Star of the Sea Elementary and High School and became very close to the Sisters at school. "They were like my family. I confided in them. But they did not like to see boy's rings around my neck." When Jeanne was nineteen years old she entered St. Mary's Novitiate in Los Angeles on September 15, 1946. She received the habit on March 19, 1947 and was given the name Sister Jeanne Therese. Sister pronounced first vows March 19, 1949, and made her final profession on August 15, 1954.

She taught first grade while working on her teaching credential. Jeanne said, "With the help of the older Sisters who knew how to teach and manage classes and by the grace of God the children learned to read." Jeanne was later awarded a Teachers Credential.

Sister taught in Los Angeles,

Sonoma, Hawaii for 9 years, Lafayette, Fresno and Martinez, for 27 years. Her personality and love for people left a trail of lifelong friends. She was a quietly amazing woman. She had a ministry of caring for others in a very ordinary way. One of her special gifts was having time to affirm others and show that genuine friendliness so characteristic of her.

While in Martinez, Sister became Religious Education Director and Coordinator, which included preschool through college. She recruited, trained and supervised over 25 lay teachers and young adults for the Religious Education Program and youth Programs. Jeanne prepared students for the retreat program in grades eight through twelve. Together with her "Youth Team" she delivered three week-end retreats per year and served in countless activities and community service functions.

In 1980 Jeanne was given the Woman of the Year Award by the Martinez Area Chamber of Commerce. Then in 1987, on March 19 the Mayor of Martinez declared Sister Jeanne Therese Day. In part the Mayor said; "She has been given the freedom to hug by her religious community and uses this freedom to bring joy, consolation, and love to many in our community. Sister has spent hours in the service to the sick, to troubled teens, and to grieving families. She gives her smile and warmth to all she meets on her walks with her dog "Lady" – a friend to all (with food).

On behalf of all those who know and appreciate this fine person, in recognition of Sister Jeanne Therese's many years of

good work and loving service we thank her."

A lay friend described Sister as a warm and considerate friend whom others felt they could call on at any time. She gave Sisterly love, support and encouragement to many over her lifetime.

Humor was special quality Sister possessed. She once said, "Imagine my chagrin when I found out I was English instead of Irish." She also said, "During high school I worked at Southern Pacific in the new office. It was an exciting place to be on VE Day and VJ Day." Another story Sister loved to tell was about Sister Adrienne Kennedy, who was sensitive regarding Jeanne's needs as an orphan. "Sister Adrienne very discreetly made sure I received an envelope with a dummy receipt, so it appeared as if I was paying my tuition just like everyone else.

Sister's last active mission was in Martinez, where she was missioned from 1974 – 2006. She became an active retired sister there in 2002, and in 2006 came to Carondelet Center for a ministry of prayer and witness.

Dear Sister Jeanne Therese, somehow you came to know at a young age you were never really alone, for God was always lovingly with you, providing families to care for you. Awareness and compassion were father and mother to you. We thank you for your joyous, gentle life, and for the many friends you made by seeing all people as the

"dear neighbor." Your CSJ Family will miss your smile, which could light up a room. We rejoice you are now free to roam heaven and revisit your many friends.

Let us never confuse the ordinary with the simple, the static or the boring. Living an ordinary life well can be a very complicated thing to do. It takes great talent to make a great life out of a routine one.

~ Joan Chittister

~ Written by Sister Frances Baker, CSJ



Lie back daughter,
let your head
be tipped back
in the cup of my hand.
Gently, and I will hold you.

~ Philip Booth