

Sister Mary Joseph returned to the Motherhouse in 1990. While there, she was assigned to various positions: Novice Mistress, Local Superior, Secretary General, Administratrix General, and also secretary to our founder, his Excellency, the Most Reverend Clarence Kelly. Sister handled the medical needs of the Sisters and oversaw all our major construction projects. These included the completion of our Motherhouse, the new Saint Pius V School on Long Island, and the convent extension in Minnesota. With her knowledge, prudent advice, and tireless hard work, Sister provided valuable assistance to the whole congregation.

Sister's Illness and Example

In December 2021, Sister was diagnosed with cancer. She underwent a number of treatments and surgeries, but after a year it was determined that the treatments were no longer effective. As was characteristic, Sister accepted this news with peace and resignation to God's Will.

Often during her illness she was blessed to receive the Sacraments from the bishops and priests of the Congregation of Saint Pius V. Sister's relatives traveled from California, Colorado, and Virginia to be with her. This time with her family was precious to Sister. We, as well, were privileged to frequently visit with her and each time were edified by her cheerfulness and patience in suffering.



Sister's Words

I teasingly told Sister Mary Joseph that her bed was a pulpit during the last weeks of her life. She laughed but continued to preach. To our Novices and Postulants, she would say, "Religious life is above and beyond anything you can conceive. There is so much peace and calm in religious life."

She told our young professed Sisters, "Your jobs may seem small, but they are important for the community." Since she was greatly dedicated to priests, Sister added this reminder, "By the way, pray for priests."

With the older members of the congregation, Sister recalled stories from the past. She expressed gratitude and love to her companions in religious life and beside her bed, kept a picture of the Sisters who had entered the convent the same year as she. Sister also had by her bed the quotation from our Silver Jubilee ceremony, "I embrace anew the holy Rule and Constitutions. I ratify my profession and renew it with all my heart. I promise again to comfort the Sacred Heart of Jesus."