



Sisters of St. Francis of Mary Immaculate

As day dawned on December 9, 2019, our Sister Juanita Ujcik's awakening was of an eternal sort. Drawn from this life to the gate of heaven, she entered fully into the mystery of Advent. With a ready heart, she knew that one day, "the coming of the Lord would be at hand" (James 5:8). Though not knowing the day or the hour, she kept her lamp trimmed and burning (Matt 25:13).

As a follower of Jesus who whole-heartedly embodied the evangelical spirit of the 25th chapter of Matthew's Gospel, there is every reason to believe that she was welcomed into her new life with the words: "Well done, good and faithful servant! (Matt 25: 21) Truly I tell you, whatever you did for the least of my brothers and sisters, you did for me" (Matt 25:40).

In honoring Sister Juanita's request that her Alleluia letter be very brief and factual, the highlights of her life begin in Chicago, where she was born on April 6, 1940, the only child of her loving parents Mary (Voltarel) and Stanley Ujcik. Blessed with a large extended family, she learned to observe the realities of life and to do so through the eyes of a disciple. Her approach to gospel-living was straightforward and a common venture that she readily invited others to share. Simply expressed in her own words - when she saw a problem, she learned about it, she spoke about it, she prayed about it and to the extent that she was able, she acted upon it, and whenever possible, she empowered people to help themselves.

This way of living was at the very core of her being and her Franciscan vocation. From the day of her entrance into the postulancy of the Sisters of St. Francis of Mary Immaculate on September 14, 1958, until her death sixty-one years later, she courageously and compassionately held fast to her

Alleluia!



Sister Juanita Regine Ujcik, OSF

commitment. She was an innovative and dedicated teacher at three Catholic high schools, J. W. Scott public high school, Lewis University and Will County Detention Center. An undaunted and visionary director of JUST of DuPage, and for 20 years, of the Center for Correctional Concerns in Joliet, she also served as a hope-filled Vocation Minister, untiring Social Justice Minister, an inspirational author and a hearer and doer of the Word of God. She served on many committees for Social Justice with the Office of Human Dignity of the Joliet Diocese as well as serving on the Anti-Racism Committee of the Joliet Franciscans. She was also active at the University of St. Francis serving on the Anti-Racism and Charism Committees. Flowing from her care for the incarcerated, she authored the book *Let None Walk Alone*, written specifically for their families.

Humbled by the recognition that she received for her Gospel witness and achievements, Sr. Juanita attributed everything to the gracious God who called her and the People of God who inspired her to "keep on keepin' on" in the task of bending the arc of history in the direction of God's justice, peace, mercy and reconciliation.

Alleluia, Alleluia!

Sister Uanita Regine Ujcik, OSF

April 6, 1940— December 9, 2019

Born: April 6, 1940
Parents: Stanley Ujcik and Mary (Voltarel) Ujcik
Postulancy: September 14, 1958
Novitiate: August 13, 1959
First Profession: August 13, 1961
Final Profession: August 13, 1966
Entered New Life: December 9, 2019

Ministry History

1961-1962 Student: College of St. Francis, Joliet, Illinois
1962-1963 Teacher: Grade 2, St. John's, Joliet, Illinois
1963-1967 Teacher: Algebra, Chemistry, Physics, Religion, Geometry, Trigonometry, Mechanical Drawing, St. Mary's High School, Columbus, Ohio
1967-1969 Teacher: Algebra, Chemistry, Physics, Religion, St. Thomas Aquinas High School, Louisville, Ohio
1969-1972 Teacher: Secondary Education, St. Francis de Sales, Toledo, Ohio
1972-1984 Teacher: J. W. Scott High School, Toledo, Ohio
1984-1984 Teacher: Lewis University, Lockport, Illinois, and Will County Jail, Joliet, Illinois
1985-1986 Teacher: Lewis University, Lockport, Illinois, and Lewis University, Lockport, Illinois
1986-1988 Director: Center for Correctional Concerns, Joliet, Illinois, and JUST of DuPage
1989-1996 Director: Center for Correctional Concerns, Joliet
1996-2009 Executive Director: Center for Correctional Concerns, Joliet
2009-2019 Social Justice Minister: Congregation, Joliet

Wake: Wednesday, December 18, 2019, 2:00-6:45 p.m., Our Lady of Angels, Joliet
Prayer Service: Wednesday, December 18, 2019, 4:45 p.m., Our Lady of Angels, Joliet
Mass of Christian Burial: Wednesday, December 18, 2019, , 7:00 p.m., Our Lady of Angels, Joliet
Burial: Thursday, December 19, 2019, leaving Our Lady of Angels at 9:00 a.m. to Resurrection Cemetery, Romeoville, Illinois
Interment: Section 8, Lot 345, Grave 1, Resurrection Cemetery
Predeceased by: Her parents: Stanley Ujcik and Mary (Voltarel) Ujcik
Survived by: Numerous cousins

Rest in Peace, Sister Juanita!