

In Memory of Sr. Sean Marie Moran

~Excerpts from the Homily by Fr. Tom Orians, SA, given
at Sr. Sean Marie's Funeral Mass ~

Funeral Mass: September 7, 2013 — in the Motherhouse Chapel

What does our Gospel tell us about moments like this in our life when we must say our final farewell to those we love. It tells us that Jesus knew full well what it is like. Unless a grain of wheat falls to the ground and dies, it remains just that

Jesus knew the pains of leaving behind; he also felt the emptiness that comes with deep loss. Jesus was not spared the ache and struggle of letting go but he also knew of the joy and hope that lay ahead... but if it dies it produces much fruit. Sr. Joyce Rupp calls this the hello-goodbye-hello pattern of the human journey. Jesus goes on in the gospel to tell us "But it was for this that I came, Father glorify your name." Sean Marie's hour has finally come and she has glorified our God in so many ways with the witness of her life.

Jesus also reminds us in the Gospel, "whoever serves me must follow me and where I am, there also will my servant be." What comforting words for each of us and for Sean Marie. This gospel is near the end of Jesus' life as he drew near to his own death. It was his time for goodbyes as he recalled his life here preparing for the great act of redemption in which we were all made one in Christ. He was facing an agonizing tension. On one hand he yearned to be with God his Father who claimed his heart, while on the other, he longed to be with those he loved so dearly. There is a beauty in today's Gospel that Jesus knew and Sean Marie knew. The Father, the one whom Jesus treasured and with whom he yearned to be with, surprised humanity and raised him from the dead. Looking back on the resurrection the disciples could say, "Now we understand...this is the grain of wheat that has fallen onto the ground and died." It was in dying and rising that the world was transformed. Sean Marie could see how his risen presence transformed our world and how it transformed her world as a follower of Jesus, even centuries later. Today we too must stand strong in the certainty of the resurrection, believing that there is something beyond death, beyond pain and heartache. Here also is where our strength and hope lie.

Mother Lurana wrote many years ago on the occasion of the death of one of her own, Sr. Mary Anna, "she was a woman of the widest sympathies, her most characteristic attribute was undoubtedly the great overflowing store of love that God had put within her heart; love, deep personal interest, tenderness and ... with a deep gift of sympathy, so personal and so gracious in its healing touch.... As a true daughter of St Francis, it goes without saying she was devoted to the poor.... The heart action suddenly ceased...we can only guess that our Lord had said, "Arise, my love, and come away." That was written over 100 years ago but the words of Mother Lurana ring so true of our sister, Sean Marie today.

A few days ago the soul of Sean Marie left her body. Today the hands that were always busy, are at rest. We know they were always busy doing good, hands always open to those less fortunate, hands regularly folded in prayer. Her hands are lifeless now and her feet as well which carried her so often to this chapel and hurried her to tasks of helpfulness towards each of you and to those in need. We recall her eyes that brightened us with friendship and recall her humor that brought laughter and joy. We know with her eyes she looked to God with such absolute faith and trust. Her tongue, which spoke consoling and encouraging words is now motionless. The heart that beat with the love of God beats no more. All seems lifeless. But Sean Marie knew more. She knew her feet will carry her firmly to the feet of the Lord whom she served faithfully. Her hands will be raised in praise, her eyes will sparkle in God's presence.

She knew her heart - weak as was here on earth - it now throbs with the happiness of being forever with Him, whom she loved. She is fully at-one now with God and Christ; and what joy she must be experiencing. We say that, "We joy in God through whom we have received the atonement." She now knows the fullness of that joy. We hear again Jesus' words, "Whoever serves me must follow me and where I am, there also will my servant be." What great consolation for us as we gather to bid our final farewell to Sean Marie. Yes we will miss her, her physical presence, her good spirit, her faith and her courage. But through it all we know she is home now with Jesus and God who called her by name.

May all of us who are numbered in the 'Children of the Atonement,' meet again in our heavenly home where Sean Marie now dwells.

Eternal rest grant unto to her O Lord, and let perpetual light shine upon her.



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Sr. Sean Marie Moran was born to John and Anna (Gralton) Moran on October 7, 1932 in Co. Leitrim, Ireland. She was named Mary Anne Moran and was one of four children.

Sr. Sean Marie had two sisters and one brother. In the photo to the left, Sean Marie is pictured here with her sister, Angela, and three nieces in Ireland.

Sean Marie entered the Franciscan Sisters of the Atonement in Ireland on February 1, 1949. She entered the Novitiate on October 11, 1950 and made her First Profession of Vows on October 15, 1951. It was on August 31, 1957 that Sr. Sean Marie professed her Final Vows.

Sr. Sean Marie entered the Eternal Kingdom on September 4, 2013.

Sister had faithfully served on numerous missions:

Ticonderoga, NY; Vineyard, Washington, DC; Vancouver, BC, Canada; Rossinver, Ireland; Washington Retreat House; Assisi, Italy; Calvary Hospital; St. Joseph's Infirmery; Mother Lurana House and finally, the Motherhouse at Graymoor.



Sister ministered for 16 years at Mother Lurana House where she participated in the various programs throughout the years, especially the Mother Lurana Adult Social Day Center with seniors.