



**Sr. Joan Klemballa, DW, Ph.D., RN, FNP-PC, 81**

**Sr. Joan of the Rosary**

**6/20/37 - 2/9/19**

**62 Years Professed**

*Eulogy by Sr. Catherine Sheehan, DW*

*February 14, 2019*

Thank you for the honor of addressing you today. Over these days, we have all be sharing stories and experiences of Joan. I encourage you to continue to do so in the days, weeks and years to come. There is truly plenty to say about our dear Joan.

To know Joan was to know what was important to her – she was not shy about speaking her mind and her heart.

I will share just a bit of three treasured aspects of Joan’s life – her family, the Daughters of Wisdom and, her life as a nurse.

Joan grew up in Bellerose, daughter of Charles and Anne with her sister (Anne), brother Chuck and her grandmother. Joan’s grandmother set the benchmark for cooking. Joan always bragged about her cooking. I don’t know how you as the family did, but we never quite met the benchmark. It was there that Joan learned about life, love, and faith. Joan’s family grew when Chuck married Jeanette, and they welcomed three daughters: Michelle, Carolyn, and Tricia. Joan’s love and dedication to this new family lit up her world and grew deeper and wider to encompass their husbands and their children – Ray, Charlie, Mary Kate, Bobby, Victoria, and Colby. After Jeanette’s passing, Joan welcomed JoAnn into the fabric of the Klemballa family. To know Joan was to know that she was an aunt, a great aunt, a sister, and a sister-in-law. We, the Daughters of Wisdom and friends of Joan can all attest to how deeply she loved each of you.

Joan went to Our Lady of Wisdom Academy in Ozone Park – a cherished place where life-long friends were made and where she met the Daughters of Wisdom. Joan entered the postulancy in February 1956 and made her First Vows on August 2, 1957. Joan’s life





of ministry as a Daughter of Wisdom started at St. Charles Orthopedic Hospital in Brooklyn. She was Head Nurse and later was Assistant Director of Nursing Service. We received word from a patient Joan cared for there so many years ago - who said she was supportive of him through his life beyond St. Charles and most recently was a part of his 40<sup>th</sup> wedding anniversary celebration. Joan also served at Holy Family Hospital in Brooklyn as Supervisor of the Operating Room. Then our adventurous sister went to Malawi, Africa where she served at Balaka Leprosy Hospital and St. Joseph's Hospital. At St. Joseph's Hospital Joan was Pediatric Supervisor and Clinical Instructor. Upon her return to the United States, Joan was a Clinical Instructor at Catholic Medical Center in Jamaica, New York.

From 1978 to 1987, Joan was an Assistant Professor of Nursing at the University of the District of Columbia. There Joan lived at the Formation Community, and that is where I got to know Joan. Joan was very dedicated to making sure that "the novices" learned practical things – one was gardening and mowing the lawn. We often referred to Joan as overseeing "outside" Formation.

Joan's life as a Daughter of Wisdom and a nurse were one – for to know Joan was to know she was a Daughter of Wisdom and a nurse. Joan's nursing education began at Maryview Hospital School of Nursing in Portsmouth, VA. It was there that Joan learned the basics – Joan referred to three essential things for happy patients – keep the patients clean, fed and warm, and everything else will work out. Joan continued her nursing education at St. John's University where she received her Bachelor of Science in Nursing, New York University – a Master's in nursing with a specialty in Bio-Physical Pathology, a Ph.D. in Human Development from the University of Maryland and a certification as a Family Nurse Practitioner from Marshall University in Huntington, West Virginia.

Joan always referred to herself as a nurse – however, she was the consummate educator. Joan had a gift for teaching and forming generations of others in the art of nursing while steeped in the science of physiology and pathology. Joan never lost the ability to care for the patient and not just the illness. Darlene, a friend of Joan's from Maryview Hospital shared with me this story –



Her neighbor, a nurse, who she often would talk with about nursing spoke of a nun she had as a teacher when she was an undergraduate student nurse. She recounted that she had some problems academically and was specifically concerned about the difficult content of neurology, but this teacher counseled her and encouraged her to keep studying and one day it would click. Darlene asked what her name was, and she responded, Dr. Klemballa! Today this woman is a Neuro Nurse Practitioner practicing in West Virginia.

Joan worked for many years as a Family Nurse Practitioner in West Virginia with her beloved friend Eileen Catterson at the Pineville Children's Clinic and the Tug River/Catterson Health Center in Pineville. The impact these two women made on this corner of West Virginia is nothing short of amazing. Joan also taught at Mountain State University in Beckley West Virginia both in the Bachelor's and Master's Nursing Programs. Joan somehow also found time to work as a staff nurse for the Hospice of Southern West Virginia.

Joan was an excellent teacher - always engaged in the direct practice of nursing. Most recently Joan was an Adjunct Professor of Nursing at Molloy College from 2013 to the present. As a volunteer at RotaCare Free Clinic in Uniondale, Joan practiced as a Family Nurse Practitioner. Many years after living with Joan in Washington, I had the privilege of working side by side Joan at the RotaCare Clinic. The time I spent doing this are cherished moments - having been a nurse myself now for over 30 years - I had the opportunity to witness and work with the one who has been my mentor since the start.

Since Joan returned to New York, she has been of tremendous service to our Sisters and staff at Our Lady of Perpetual Help Convent and at the Sisters of St. Joseph's Maria Regina Residence. Joan has consulted, comforted and a compassionately accompanied many through times of illness and dying. Joan was a regular - shall we say - to us at the Provincial Office - always willing and available to help in Mission Advancement, collect water bottles to be recycled, to tell a story or encourage and console a staff member.

Joan - you taught us your Sisters, friends, and family - of Wisdom, who has been your guide and companion along the way. You may not have described yourself in words as being a "*spirituality* person," but you were indeed spiritual - demonstrated through your compassion and action on behalf of the suffering and vulnerable.



As we heard in the reading yesterday –

Do not imagine there is but one way that leads to Wisdom.

There is but your way.

Follow it to the end, and you will find Wisdom.

(Rabbi Rami Shapiro)

We who love you dearly will miss you and remain ever grateful – Well done, good and faithful servant!

**Catherine Sheehan, D.W.**

**February 14, 2019**