

***“I will go Lord, if You lead me.
I will hold Your people in my heart.” (Chorus of Song ‘Here I am Lord’)***



Sr. Kathleen Houlihan (Sr. M. Giuseppe)

Born: 15.04.1928 Kew, Vic. Australia

First Profession: 26.01.1955 Mary's Mount, Balwyn

Entered Eternal Life: 20.09.2024 Hawthorn East, Vic. Australia

Sr. Kathleen was born in Melbourne in the suburb of Kew to parents Thomas and Ivy Houlihan. Kath, as we affectionately called her, had an older sister Margaret and three younger sisters who were born triplets. I am sure that left a very busy and full household. Kath has always remained very close to her family, although she lived, most of her religious life far away in PNG. She maintained a lasting connection with her family which was enhanced through home visits and periods of leave in Australia, all were deeply valued and appreciated.

Sr. Kath trained as a teacher and taught in Melbourne until February 1959 when she was appointed to teach in PNG. Sr. Kath made her Perpetual Profession in Vunapope on 25.1.1960. She then taught in schools in PNG for over thirty-two years. During this period Sr. Kath taught in the primary education system, was headmistress in Valoka WNB, and Malagunan, ENB. She was appointed co-ordinator at Xavier Institute in Port Moresby when it was established in 1970 after which in 1977, she taught at Mongop High School, New Ireland for ten years. Sr. Kath then was given the responsibility of Christian Education Co-ordinator in the Archdiocese of Rabaul for four years 1988 – 1991 which covered both East and West New Britain. The number of children, families, religious members, friends and people she encountered over these years is immeasurable. It is sufficient to say that she touched the hearts of all whom she met with her warm affectionate smile and attentive listening. She truly did 'hold Your people in my heart'.

Sr. Kath was always open to whatever opportunities would come her way. Whenever she was home on leave, and periodically at other times, she sort out courses for her on-going professional development and spiritual renewal. She attended the spiritual renewal program in 1976 at Pymble, Sydney, run by the Jesuits. In 1986 she attended a spiritual renewal program in Sydney. In 1992 the Heart of Life Program in Melbourne. In 1993 the APIA course in Manila and in 1997 the Spiritual Direction Course at Wellspring in Melbourne whilst caring for her mother.

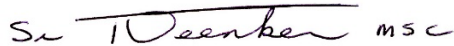
These spiritual courses assisted her work in Formation, the PNG Province and wider Congregation. Sr. Kath served as Directress of the temporary professed sisters, she contributed to running the post novitiate programme in Valoka and Mongop and was also involved in Provincial administration and served as councillor and Province secretary. In addition, she accompanied and mentored temporary professed sisters and offered directed retreats to some of the sisters. Sr. Kath continued to assist in the area of Formation and spiritual accompaniment until her return to Australia in 2011.

The Australian Province were delighted to welcome our Sr. Kath back to her homeland. We were privileged to have her with us for the last thirteen years. Sr. Kath always radiated a peaceful, calm patient presence. We were always greeted with a warm affectionate smile and given a sense of being truly welcomed. She had a sense of fun, loved music and enjoyed sharing stories of her life's experiences.

Sr. Kath lived her life to the full, her missionary commitment to the people of PNG and the Congregation was exceptional. We the MSC sisters in Australia give thanks for this beautiful woman who faithfully and totally committed herself to the One who called her and led her. May she now be at peace and enfolded in God's Love. May she know God's delight in her.

Requiem Mass for Sr. Kath will be celebrated at Our Lady of Good Counsel Church, Deepdene on Tuesday 1st October 2024 at 11.00 am then we will accompany her to her final resting place at the Eltham Cemetery.

On behalf of the Missionary Sisters of the Sacred Heart of the Australian Province

 Sr. Theresia Veenker msc

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Date: 25th September, 2024