

Rome, 29 December 2018

**MESSAGE OF TRIBUTE TO SR. MARIE BERNADETTE FOX**

Dear Family of Sr. Bernadette, Sisters and Friends,

I am sorry that I cannot be with you. However, like thousands of sisters and mission partners we are united with you in thanksgiving for the gift of Sr. Bernadette Fox.

On behalf of the Congregation, I want to express our gratitude to Bernadette's family for sharing your sister with us and for all the love and support you gave her each day of her life. We know the families of our sisters are our best benefactors and we will always keep you in our prayers when we remember Bernadette.

I also want to say thank you to Sr. Monica and all the sisters in the province who cared so deeply for Bernadette and journeyed with her through the years. She was always interested in what was happening in the world and in the Congregation and you kept her informed and sometimes she informed you. She also enjoyed a good time and I understand that her recent birthday was a very good time.

Touching tributes to Bernadette from the Congregation have come from all corners of the world. They are remembrances of her support to create more effective ways in our ministries that took us to be closer to the poor and women in crisis as well as challenges to live our consecrated lives beyond monastic walls. This was a call for renewal from Vatican II.

Her vision required courage and fortitude as it was not always easy to facilitate change; and yet, there was energy in her and a focus that helped many sisters to embrace the "New Springtime" that she longed for in the Congregation.

Her view of leadership had a "newness" that was not only attentive to our structures, but also to relationships. Many of the tributes received reflect this as Sisters remember a brief, but powerful exchange with her or a note she sent them that they treasure to this day. I witness to that as I still have a note she wrote to me when I was a young novice director.

She had a concern about formation and the education of the sisters. In tribute to Bernadette, we have named our educational fund in her honor.

She was a promoter of new life and today we celebrate her fullness of life with the God who was the center of her life. We give thanks for her deep faith and trust that the Holy Spirit will lead us even in the darkest of moments. May we honor her legacy by being open to an uncertain future with the same courage and confidence in the Holy Spirit and in one another.

Bernadette will be missed, but not forgotten as she will live on in our hearts.  
*"Life is not ended, but merely changed."*

United in mission,

*Ellen Kelly, RGA*

Ellen Kelly, RGS  
Congregational Leader