

Sister Janet Dohr, C.P.P.S.

Born: October 23, 1945

Professed: August 10, 1966

Entered into Life: April 6, 2020

Verse on her memorial card:

“If you remain in my word, you will truly be my disciples, and you will know truth, and the truth will set you free.” John 8:31-32



April 6, 2020

Dear Sisters,

Shortly before 9 a.m. on Monday, April 6, 2020, Jesus and His mother welcomed our Sister Janet Dohr into their loving embrace. For nearly 21 years, Sister Janet quietly and bravely battled a rare blood disease, sharing only with those closest to her the tremendous toll it was taking on her body. Her faithful friend, Sister Fran Raia, accompanied her on every step of this arduous journey. At the beginning of this Holy Week, Janet’s passiontide is finished. Well done, good and faithful servant!

Born on October 23, 1945, Janet was the second of three children of Frank and Lillian (Touzinsky) Dohr. Her strong faith was nurtured by her parents, and St. Wenceslaus Parish was the center of her family’s life. After graduating from St. Elizabeth Academy, she entered our novitiate on July 25, 1964 and professed first vows on August 10, 1966. She received the name Sister Lois.

Sister Janet earned a bachelor’s degree in English from Marillac College, a master’s degree in Religious Studies from St. Louis University and a master’s in Psychology and Pastoral Counseling from Loyola University in Baltimore, MD. She also earned a Certificate of Advanced Studies in Counseling and Therapy (specialist’s degree) from Johns Hopkins University. Encouraged by her academic advisors to continue for a PhD from Johns Hopkins, she chose instead to return to Missouri to be closer to community.

Sister Janet’s first ministry was in elementary education. Her creativity and sense of humor engaged her students at St. Joseph School, Cottleville; St. Henry School, Charleston; St. George School, St. Louis; and St. John the Baptist, Gildehaus, all in Missouri. She served as a pastoral minister at St. Henry Parish in Charleston and Immaculate Conception Parish in Jackson, MO. In addition, she taught at St. Mary’s Seminary in Perryville, MO.

Since 1985, after completing her studies in Baltimore, Janet ministered as a counselor, psychotherapist, spiritual director and retreat director. Her listening ear, her loving heart and her gentle counsel guided many through life’s struggles. Among the papers Janet left to help with the writing of this letter was a poem from C.S. Lewis. “So it was You all along. Everyone I ever

loved, it was You.” I can picture Jesus now saying to Janet, “When I was in distress you listened to me. When I was most vulnerable, you freed me from my fears and sorrows. When I was depressed, you strengthened my spirit. Indeed, it was Me all along.”

Because of her deep care and concern for her clients, Janet found it very difficult to cut back on her counseling and spiritual direction practice. She helped each of her clients and directees to find another counselor or director before ending her professional relationship with them.

Community was the center of Janet’s life. Despite advancing pain and weakness, she always stood ready to help. Last summer, along with her good friend, Dr. Claude Bernard, she generously led our community day. As a member of the core committee for our community’s 175th anniversary, she worked on surprises for our upcoming September 6, 2020 Steinerfest - even from her room at Abbey Senior Health.

Sister Janet was preceded in death by her parents. She is survived by her brother, Frank, her sister, Barbara, nieces and nephews and grand nieces and nephews. Janet kept close to her family, rejoicing in their accomplishments and sharing in their sorrows. She was available faithfully to her mother, especially during Lillian’s years in a nursing home. Janet took great joy in sharing family stories, particularly funny stories of the adventures of her grand nieces and nephews. She loved creating parties and collecting gifts for *Rob Your Neighbor*.

Among Sister Janet’s papers is one labeled, *My Favorite Prayer*. In part it says, “I call on all the saints who’ve gone before us. . . We will need them to take our hand as we let go of our family and friends here on earth. Make yourself irresistible to me, O Spirit of Jesus, so that I can face the moment bravely, setting aside my concerns and ready to leap into your next surprise.”

Janet did face that moment bravely, and she has leapt into that “next surprise.” Now, instead of indulging in Sister Fran’s lovingly prepared meatballs and risotto, she feasts on the delights of the heavenly banquet table in a new pain-free life that is beyond our wildest imagining.

Sadly, we cannot gather now to share our grief or to celebrate Janet’s life. Sister Janet’s body will be cremated, and we will gather later to celebrate the gift that she was and is to each of us. In the meantime, let us join hands with Janet and all those saints to whom she prayed and ask them to ease the pain of this loss. Let us be particularly mindful of her family, Sister Fran, her profession classmates, Father Joe Uvietta and her many friends who are too numerous to mention. Happy Easter, Janet!

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Sr. Janice Bader". The ink is dark and the handwriting is fluid and personal.

Sr. Janice Bader