



Memorial Address for Sr. Marlene Mondaleck

delivered 21 November 2020.

Dear Sister Marlene! Our spiritual mother! A sister whose heart overflowed with the love of Jesus! When we call your name crying in sorrow, the words of the Gospel touch our hearts because you lived out and proclaimed the words of Jesus, as recorded in Mathew's Gospel: "You shall love the Lord, your God, with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your mind. You shall love your neighbor as yourself." (Mathew 22:37-38) You witnessed the love of Jesus who crucified himself for his people through your life on the earth.

When you volunteered to go to South Korea for a mission, the opposition from your family could not break your will and passion for the mission. You were encouraged by the words: "No one who sets a hand to the plow and looks to what was left behind is fit for the Kingdom of God." (Luke 9:62) You came to Korea on 4 April 1968, at the age of twenty-six. Your love for Korea grew while teaching English to the students at St. Joseph Girls' High School in Gangjin, where Sisters Mary Agnes and Noreen were. You always missed those times with the students of St. Joseph School.

You were *사랑꾼* (*Saranggun*: a person who expresses or shows their love greatly in Korean) for Korea. You always praised and boasted of the depth and beauty of Korean culture to our American sisters. You loved Korea as your hometown. In 2010 you, as a General Superior, visited Korea to celebrate the 50th anniversary of the establishment of the Korean Province. And you had an interview on *The Invitation from Mr. Wang Jong Geun, Gwangju, MBC* (the program of the Munhwa Broadcasting Corporation in Gwangju, Korea). The announcer asked you why you love Korea so much. You answered: "I am fascinated by the deep culture of Korea and the *정* (*Jeong*: affection, kindness, goodwill; the Korean concept of *정* is the rapport that ties people together regardless if they are a friend or not, even if they hate each other) of the Koreans that you can feel in your heart even if you cannot explain the feeling of Koreans in words."

While performing your responsibility as a novice director and provincial superior of the Korean Province, you played a massive role in inculturation of the spirit of the Sisters of Charity of Seton Hill into Korea.

Along with the spirituality of St. Elizabeth Ann Seton, the founder of Sisters of Charity, you shared the unique 정 of the Koreans with others. You welcomed them with hospitality so that all the people who visited us at that time used to tell us she greeted them as Christ.

Sister Marlene! You were also a great leader who always sought the Divine Providence and God's will with deep faith. You showed servant leadership, looking for the signs of the times, listening to others' opinions, and leading the community through communal discernment. For instance, the bishop, Yoon Gong Hee, of Gwang Ju Diocese at that time provided the Night Study Center to us for educating the students with deprived circumstances. In the beginning, we planned to open a school for the deaf, following our American sisters' footsteps who were active in the USA. However, the need of Gwangju City was urgent for taking care of the children with physical challenges. At that time, we did not have any professional human resources in that area, and this education area was not familiar to us at all. However, responding to the need of the time, we opened the school for the children with physical disabilities, now the Eunhae School, while forming the sisters in this profession. In the process of this kind of decision-making and other series of works, you have taught us to move forward with courage placing everything in the Divine Providence despite any future difficulties.

You are such a gracious and beautiful gift to us from God. How good and kind you are! You never failed to treat others with authentic and selfless love flowing from the heart. Your presence made us experience the presence of God and enabled our hearts to grow pure. During the past three years of sickness, you accepted the help of others with humility and always expressed your gratitude to them, saying, "thank you." Even while losing your memory, you still opened your lips to recite the prayers while in bed. One hour before you passed away, you prayed the rosary with the sisters. Recalling the time with you praying the rosary on that night is a great consolation for us in sadness.

Dear Sister Marlene!

You are the spiritual director who always leads us to God, like the light of a lamp. With all your heart and soul, and with laying down your life, you loved God. You served people with gentleness and humility. From your sickbed, you participated in the suffering of the crucified Jesus. At last, you finished your earthly journey. Thank you for leading our lives to God through your entering heaven, surrounded by the light of the Resurrection of our Lord. We are grateful for you being with us! Now we are sending you to God. Please rest in eternal peace!

Lastly, I express gratitude to all the bishops, priests, alumni of St. Joseph High School, our benefactors, and sisters who took care of Sr. Marlene in her sickbed, and the sisters of Mother Seton House – all showed love and help on behalf of Sr. Marlene. She who resembles Jesus is waving her hands and saying, "God bless you" to us.

Thank you, and thank you again!

Warm regards,

Sr. Lee Shin Ja, SC