



## **Eulogy of Sister Joan Maga, BVM (Joanice)**

St. Bernard Church, Los Angeles

May 5, 2018

Joan Lucille Maga was born on May 9, 1937, to Peter and Virginia (Baudino) Maga. Her father was an immigrant from Italy. Her mother was from Gallup, N.M., born of Italian parents. Joan initially lived in Los Angeles until the family built a home in the olive grove of north Glendale.

Joan grew up in a family of achievers. Her maternal grandfather was twice elected mayor of Glendale. Her mother was an early feminist achiever in the 1920s, graduating from UCLA. Her father worked for the Los Angeles Metropolitan Water Company, starting out as a base worker, completing his engineering degrees, and finishing as the person responsible for the greater LA water source migration. Joan was a Girl Scout throughout her early years with her mother as scoutmaster. She left the Girl Scouts as a Mariner with medals.

On Sept. 8, 1955, Joan entered the BVM congregation from Incarnation Parish and the same home in which she spent her last years. She made first vows on Feb. 3, 1958, and final vows on July 16, 1963.

After achieving her Bachelor of Arts degree from Mundelein College in Chicago in 1960, she went to St. Brigid School in San Francisco where she taught multiple grades during her eight years there. From there she spent one year at St. Ann in Butte, Mont.

In 1969, Joan transferred to St. Bernard Elementary in Los Angeles, where she spent the next 40 years. She began by teaching fifth grade. Her eagerness led to an afterschool guitar class of 15+ students (lefties included). Although she seldom performed, she loved music, understood the basics and taught the students to perform. Today, two students from that original class are currently working as musicians in their parishes.

Joan led by determination with clearly defined performance standards. She used innovative instructional techniques and even received a grant from the Archdiocese of Los Angeles for her project "Seeing and Telling the Christian Message through Film." She employed any strategy that got students to learn, which included reading the sports page at breakfast, partly out of interest, but also so that she could relate the latest stats to the students. Who wouldn't listen to a teacher who knew her sports?

Joan motivated students to success. She inspired by her inner spirit whether it be classes, speech tournaments, academic decathlons, volleyball, basketball or softball, and received multiple recognitions for her achievements. In 1995, she received the Monsignor Languille Sportsmanship Award as a Catholic Youth Organization (CYO) Coach. In 2009, although retired, she, along with colleagues, started a small, private school, the Academy of Our Lady, where she continued for three years. Two years ago, she received a lifetime award from Holy Family High School for dedicated service to the local community.

Joan had a great devotion to Mary Frances Clarke and to Mother Frances Cabrini. While in the Huntington Memorial Hospital after suffering the initial stroke, she commented that Mother Clarke and Mother Cabrini didn't go to work that Sunday. Otherwise, she would not be suffering a stroke. She began Hospice on April 2. In her final days, Joan did not experience severe pain and died peacefully on April 13, 2018.