



Sister Jean Thuerauf

June 10, 2016

Thuerauf, Sister Jean 85, of Minneapolis, died Friday, June 10, 2016, at Catholic Elder Care, Minneapolis. Visitation will be Wednesday, June 15, 4:00 to 8:00 pm at St. Anthony of Padua Catholic Church at 8th Ave. and Main. Rosary will begin at 6:30 pm. Funeral Mass will be at Our Lady of Grace, 5071 Eden Ave. Edina, MN. on June 16 at 11:00 am. Visitation at 10:00 prior to mass. Burial will take place on Saturday, June 18 at 11:30 am. at Brosh Chapel in Solon, Iowa. Visitation at 10:30 prior to burial. Survivors include her sister, Mary Ann (late Wesley) Hotka of River Falls, WI; brothers, David (Ann) Thuerauf, of Mount Vernon, IA; and, Paul (Theresa) Thuerauf, of Wilcox, AZ. She is also survived by numerous beloved nieces and nephews. She was preceded in death by her parents John and Helen (Hudachek) Thuerauf; brother Bernard (Evelyn) Thuerauf of Joplin, MO; and sister, Patricia (Marvin) Spychaj, of Alexandria, VA. Sister Jean was born Dorothy Jean Thuerauf September 5, 1930 on a farm near Solon, Iowa. She graduated from Solon High School and entered the convent of the Sisters of Mercy in Cedar Rapids, taking the name Sister Mary John. She graduated from Mount Mercy College, Cedar Rapids, Iowa in 1950. She taught elementary school at St. Joseph's in Marion, St. Matthews in Cedar Rapids, and Sacred Heart in Oelwein, Iowa, before moving to Minneapolis in the early 1970's. She worked as a teacher and adult religious educator at Our Lady of Grace Church in Edina. On weekends, she did storytelling and tutoring with children of North Minneapolis. Sister Jean could be seen walking the streets with her stuffed monkey, Jocko.

The children knew that if Jocko was around, then story time was soon to follow. Her work was interrupted in 1973 when a virus infected her brain and left her near death for more than two years; it also left her temporarily blind. After surgery, she eventually recovered. Then, in 1976, she says, that she was ``told by the Lord`` to go and live in north Minneapolis -- but to leave her purse and driver`s license behind. In 1985, she formally founded the Mercy Missionaries. Sister Jean knew that the streets offered young people a life of crime, violence, and gang activity so she decided to offer the teens of North Minneapolis something different. She saw the need to engage the neighborhood's young people in educational and empowering activities, so she started inviting the community's children and teenagers into her kitchen for help with schoolwork, to hear stories of God's love and to learn to bake cookies. They would then sell those cookies on the sidewalk using a small cookie cart. It didn't take long for there to be more bakers than there was room in her tiny kitchen! In 1987, Sister Jean's vision for a safe, secure, creative, and engaging space for North Minneapolis' youth was formalized and became the Cookie Cart. The first Cookie Cart was on Emerson Ave, the next one is around the corner on Broadway Ave. with a new one which opened in St. Paul this year. Today, the Cookie Cart provides youth employment training through experiential learning. Sister Jean has touched the lives of approximately 10,000 teens through the Cookie Cart. Sister Jean also authored two books: Echoes from the City, published in 1977, and Deprived of Dignity, published in 1996. Washburn-McReavy.com Edina Chapel 952-920-3996

Tribute Wall

SP

“ I remember her from my elementary school days at OLG. She had an unforgettable upbeat spirit.



Sharon Petersen - June 14, 2016 at 08:00 PM

MH

My mother (Betty Louise Hinton) a black women from north Minneapolis with 16 children called Sister Jean her" best" and only dear friend. The Hinton family of north Minneapolis truly sends our greatest condolences to Sister Jean and her family/friends! My God bless and comfort you !

*Sincerely,
Marvin and Belinda Hinton*

Marvin Hinton - June 22, 2016 at 09:48 PM