

## **Janith (Jan) McNabb, RSCJ**

**July 1, 1922 – Jan 7, 2016**

Jan McNabb was born to Duncan James McNabb and Alexandrine Brodhead McNabb on July 1, 1922 in Grosse Ile, Michigan. She was the fifth of eight children, two of whom died in infancy. At the age of ten, she was sent to weekly boarding school and later to full-time boarding school. Jan's educational background is almost as varied as her ministerial experiences. She graduated from the Convent of the Sacred Heart, Noroton, Connecticut in 1939, received a Bachelor of Science in Chemistry from Maryville College in Saint Louis in 1943, and a Masters of Arts in teaching from the University of Detroit in 1967. Among other educational accomplishments, she earned certifications in Theological Enrichment through the Washington Theological Union, and in Pastoral Ministry through the Archdiocese of Detroit. In 1988, she completed a Clinical Pastoral Education program.

In her sophomore year at Maryville, Jan discovered that she had a vocation to religious life and entered the Society of the Sacred Heart on September 8, 1943. She made first vows on March 8, 1946. She made her final profession on July 30, 1951 in Rome. Soon after her profession, Jan began to face some mental health challenges which caused her much suffering and some rejection by people close to her. This suffering bred in her deep and lasting compassion that permeated the multiple ministries in which she was engaged.

Her ministries were far-reaching – from sea to shining sea – and beyond. Jan McNabb was a teacher, administrator and chaplain. She had an intense love for the poor and for the cause of justice. After entering the Society, she taught at the Academy of the Sacred Heart in Detroit, Michigan followed by the Convent of the Sacred Heart in Noroton, Connecticut. She continued as teacher for the next five years at the Convent of the Sacred Heart in Rochester, New York. After a short time at Saint Joseph's School in Roxbury, Massachusetts, she moved on to Cathedral High School in Boston.

During the 1970's, Jan was a community worker at the Green Street project in Albany, New York for which Bishop Howard Hubbard commended her at her funeral. She was Director of Residents and social worker at the Henry Street Settlement House in New York City and a medical secretary at the Rockefeller Institute in New York in 1972 and 1973. She taught at Julia Richman High School in New York in 1973 and at Baruch College there 1975-1977, and was Supervisor of Special Projects at the YWCA in New York. For the next ten years, Jan served in a number of roles: Provincial Secretary for the Society of the Sacred Heart in the India Province in 1978-1980, Coordinator of Special Projects for the Archdiocese of Detroit and math instructor for both the Detroit College of Business at the University of Detroit and Marygrove College

1982-1986. For the next three years she worked at St. Martin de Porres Center as Coordinator of Education in Chicago, at the Sullivan School as a teacher, at Daley College as training specialist, and at the Spanish Coalition where she taught ESL classes.

Beginning in 1989 Jan served as Chaplain for the Department of Corrections at Rikers Island in New York, and then as coordinator of Detention Ministry for the Diocese of San Jose. From 1991-1995, she served as Hospital Chaplain and Director of Pastoral Care at San Jose Medical Center and did pastoral work at Good Samaritan Hospital there. She then returned to New York and spent over ten years as Chaplain for Hospice Care for the Visiting Nurse Association in the City. Finally, because of some health issues, she "retired" in Albany, New York only to find herself working in hospice at St. Peter's Hospital there, and then at a local grammar school, where she served as an aide for kindergartners. After a severe health crisis in 2015, she went to Teresian House where she died on January 7, 2016.

In her autobiographical sketch, Jan remarked that she had often been stigmatized in the Society because of her mental health problems. This, of course, was a great source of suffering for her. Thus, she was marginalized just like the many people whom she served. However, from such suffering was bred great compassion for others, a compassion that served her well in all her ministries. She bore the wounds of Christ stoically and we were blessed by her presence among us.