

May 20, 2020

Dear Associates and Sisters

Associate Carole Jean Burkes of Richmond IN, entered her eternal resting place on March 31, 2020. Carole was born on December 18, 1940 to Marvin and Christina Guyer. Carole and her husband George had eleven children, four of whom were adopted.



Carole Jean walked the journey of becoming an Associate with her friend and contact person Judy Hillman, signing her commitment on April 29, 2001. She saw Judy as a blessing in her life, a true sister in Christ. Feeling a deeper call in life and desiring to be of greater service to others, Carole Jean followed her Franciscan heart to Oldenburg. Carole Jean was steeped in service as she ran a day care out of her home, taught religious education and RCIA classes, served as a Eucharistic Minister, provided needed items and assisted parish shut-ins, made rosaries, Holy Cards, and Christian bookmarks for those in need and for the sisters, and wrote to those who were imprisoned. In addition to these ministries she was a faithful wife, mother, and grandmother. Her early motto in life was, “Let go, and Let God.”

Carole Jean was very committed to the Richmond Associate Group. She considered the members of the group her friends. When inquired about her Associate pin, she would proudly say, “I am honored to say I am an Oldenburg Franciscan Associate.”

When a life changing event put Carole Jean in a wheelchair for the remainder of her life, she remained hopeful and positive, continuing to find ways to serve others. Hungering for an even deeper relationship with God, Carole Jean made her Permanent Commitment on April 26, 2009. Affirming Carol Jean’s call to Permanent Commitment, Judy Hillman wrote in a letter of recommendation, “When I think of Carole, I cannot help but see love and generosity as her defining ways of being. As she grows in her knowledge of God’s love for her, Carole responds by giving more of herself to God and others. As she lives into this commitment, all who come in contact with her will know that the Oldenburg Franciscan values of love, simplicity, community and prayer are what keeps Carole grounded.”

With the diminishment of her body later in life, Carole Jean and George turned to the gift of prayer. Carole Jean inquired about becoming a Minister of Praise, and faithfully accepted and responded to this call. In addition to the prayers, Carole Jean would write notes and cards to those who were homebound including the Sisters in Saint Clare Hall.

Carole Jean, with a renewed body, and the assurance of a job well done on earth, may you rest peacefully in the loving arms of God.

Jane Schaefer