

Vigil Service
Connie Power, pbvm
23 February 1934 – 19 December 2024
Betty Rae Lee, pbvm
Provincial Leader (NL)

We greet Connie's family and friends, her entrance group, Mary Brophy, Marie Roche and Marie Ryan, our Sisters, Associates and other friends as we gather to celebrate Connie's life.

Consolata Power was born on 23 February 1934. We are grateful for Anne and John, her parents who loved her into life, her grandparents, siblings, aunts, uncles and cousins - her extended family - all powerful sources of support and love. Throughout her life as you know, Connie was proud of and closely connected to her birth family.

Her birthplace, Flatrock, was the place that grounded Connie from her earliest beginnings and she appreciated the immensity, beauty and serenity of the place she called home. To testify to this, I found in her file the lyrics of a song, "*Old Flat Rock Hills*".

The first stanza reads:

*In my memories again I am strolling along
where the birds in the treetops are singing their song
to the land of my birthplace, its valleys and dells.
Yes, I'm strolling along on the Old Flat Rock Hills.*

Consolata joined our community on 31 August 1952, made first vows in 1955 receiving the name, Sister Mary Anselma John, and made final profession in 1960. Consolata, whose name means steadfastness, certainly exhibited that quality throughout her religious life. We are grateful for the charism of Nano Nagle and our religious community which nurtured the faith already enkindled in Connie's home and we thank God for Connie's journey as a woman religious where love continued to be her lantern flame.

A poem by the late Raphael Consedine:

*God of time past and time present
you held in your heart this young woman
who came dancing into your temple,
eager, joyful, vibrant with desire
to give her life for your service.*

And Connie gave generous service in community and ministry in Badger, Brent's Cove, Buchans, Cape St. George, Carbonear, Corner Brook, Grand Falls, Ferryland, Harbour Grace, Renew, St.

Mary's, St. Vincent's, St. John's, Trepassey and Windsor where she ministered as teacher and principal for thirty years. She also was a skilled choral director.

We appreciate all that helped Connie grow and develop - her extensive study in Canada and the USA which prepared her for many years of dedicated ministry among God's people.

We admired her initiative when, upon retirement from the teaching profession, she entered a new field and completed a Masters in Pastoral Studies and became Pastoral Care Coordinator at hospitals in Carbonear and Grand Falls-Windsor, a ministry to which she brought care, compassion and fidelity and was much loved by all with and to whom she ministered. In 2010 Connie received the award for Appreciated Person of the Year for all of Newfoundland and Labrador from the Pastoral Care Allied Health Group. Connie was also involved in many leadership initiatives with the Catholic Women's League and with St. Vincent de Paul.

Connie planned carefully for her wake, Vigil and Mass of Christian Burial. A glimpse into some of her choices for readings:

Job 1: 13—27: Job suffered a lot of afflictions but held onto hope with intense belief that his Redeemer lives and will always be faithful. This was Connie's faith also.

Timothy 4:7-8: This reading reinforces the steadfastness of Connie's spiritual journey. Yes, she faithfully finished the race and kept the faith passed onto her by her family and congregational ancestors.

And John's Gospel: 14: 1-16: Jesus' farewell address at the Last Supper is a consoling one as he assures his disciples that there is plenty of room in God's house and that all are welcomed there, a real promise to Connie also because she believed in this promise.

As I conclude this reflection, again I use Raphael's words as a tribute to Connie:

*God, you took Connie's gift,
you gave your own,
day by single day down the long years.
Her heart rejoiced to hear your call,
to learn your ways,
to share your love,
day by single day down the long years.*

After a long life, this gracious daughter of Nano returned to her everlasting home on 19 December 2024. She is now reunited with her loved ones in that great communion of all life.

Rest in God's peace, Connie.