



OBITUARY NOTICE



SISTER HELENA YOKO NAKAI

Entered eternal life on December 8, 2019
At the age of 73
and 21 years of religious life.

+3607

“My soul proclaims the greatness of the Lord and my spirit rejoices in God my Saviour, for he has looked upon the humble state of his servant.” Luke 1: 46-48

Yoko was born on January 2, 1946 in Mie Prefecture, Japan, the third child of Miya and Kanezo Nakai. Her baptism was celebrated on December 24, 1954 at Saint Thomas Kozaki Church. She received her First Holy Communion and Confirmation the following year.

Yoko had a normal childhood until she graduated from middle school. It was then that her life took an unexpected turn, while left to God’s sole Providence. Father Caron p.m.e. urged Yoko’s parents to enroll her in a catholic high school for girls. She specialized in Japanese and basic English and was a member of the Student Council. Yoko admired the American religious teachers who were devoted to their faith and to God. After high school, she obtained a teaching degree from a university and began working in the field of education. She noted poor academic performance among her students and a need for affection that she tried to fulfill.

She shared a room at the school with an Associate of the Sisters of Charity of Ottawa who invited her to an event. She also traveled to the Higashi Sendai Convent to participate in community gatherings where she strengthened her relationship with the Associates and the Sisters of Sendai area. A few years later, in January 1995, Yoko attended a vocational retreat presided by Sister Monique Boucher at the Convent.

It was while watching horrific images of an earthquake that caused millions of casualties that she heard a “voice”: “Do not labor for the food which perishes but for the food which endures to everlasting life” (John 6:27). This voice remained present throughout her life.

In August 1995, she attended the Congregation’s 150th Anniversary Celebrations at the Mother House in Canada as an

Associate. Then, on September 8, 1995, she entered the Congregation at the postulate established at Nagoya Convent. Sister Nakai professed her first vows on March 22, 1998 and her final vows on March 23, 2002.

From April 1998 to March 2004, she continued to do what she loved so much, teaching young people at Caritas Gakuen Junior High, and was appointed Assistant Director at a Senior high school in Kawasaki, Tokyo.

She later assumed different roles such as a translator for the General Assembly of the Congregation in Canada and took on ecclesiastical services at Kochi Nakajimacho Church in Kochi Prefecture from August 2004 to March 2005. She then served as Director at St Mary's Kindergarten at Yamagata Church until March 2007. She continued serving the Hirosaki Church and took on the responsibility of managing the Associates. A short while after, she moved to Higashi Sendai Convent where she was assigned to work at the Sendai Diocese Bishop House until November 2019 where she faithfully fulfilled her mission.

Even in her late 50's, Sister Nakai joined a group of young teenagers and participated in a language course at the University of Ottawa. She accompanied the provincial superiors in Canada, Africa, Brazil and other countries for many Congregation meetings and general Chapters.

Other than teaching young minds, Sister Yoko accomplished many tasks and responsibilities for the Congregation. Above all, she allowed herself to live in simplicity and humility. Her deep relationship with God was obvious. She enjoyed the everyday small things and loved the people she met. She was very grateful to all the Sisters who welcomed her everywhere she went to spread the Good News.

Sister Nakai was mindful of God's Mercy, Love, and Salvation and grateful for her call to religious life where she applied herself wholeheartedly and lovingly in following Jesus and accomplishing

the Father's will as Jesus had done.

"For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways," had declared the Lord. (Isaiah 55:8).

Truly, Sister Nakai aspired all her life to work and live "for things of eternal value."

In July 2019, she was diagnosed with breast cancer.

Sister Nakai was always neat and tidy. Therefore, thinking that she wouldn't be able to work after anticancer treatment, she carefully prepared all her things the day before the treatment began. In retrospect, it was just the way she always was, but at the same time it seemed as if putting things aside in order were an expression of her longing to return to the Father.

The Sisters praise her for her devotion in her apostolic work, accomplished with her gentle and humble manners and always accompanied with her faithful and fervent prayers.

She was hospitalized in November and on December 8, 2019, she peacefully left this world to be with her Good Shepherd and sing "Magnificat" with Mother Bruyère.

