



Requiescat In Pace



Please Pray For Sr Jean Byrne OCSO
Holy Cross Abbey, Whitland, Wales

Who died on Monday 5th September 2022 at Holy Cross Abbey Whitland, with her sisters gathered at her bedside praying.

Jean Watson Byrne was born in Largoward, Fife, Scotland, on 5th November 1939, she always claimed that the firework celebrations were for her entrance into the world. Jean was the eldest girl of a large family who were all very close to each other.

Sister Jean entered Stapehill in Dorset on 22 July 1962, she made her Simple Profession on 11th August 1964 and her Solemn Profession 11th August 1967. Sister Jean was 82 years old and had been in monastic vows for 58 years when the Lord called her.

During her years at Stapehill she had great energy and strength, she helped with the farm, milking, gardening, repairs in the monastery anything from mending the roof to changing a tap washer. She was sub chantress in choir.

When the community moved to Whitland, Sister Jean was tasked with setting up the altar bread production department, the community had never been involved with the altar breads before so it was a huge undertaking. Later she was Housekeeper, looked after the Orchard, kept the hens, and when she was less mobile she made cards and icons for sale.

Ill health was part of Sister Jean's life and she would have many bouts of severe pain, she would persevere and not let it thwart her both in her participation in the divine office, in her work or in any other activities in the life of the community.

From Christmas 2019 Sister Jean became unwell and moved into the infirmary, since then her health became steadily worse, her incapacity increased. For such an active person this was truly hard to bear, which she did with good grace and cheeky humour. With help from carers morning and evening, the sisters of Holy Cross Abbey looked after Sister Jean with great generosity. Sister Jean received the full ministrations of the church with frequent anointings and sacrament of the sick to sustain her.

Sister Jean's last illness started 25th August, and she was ready to go to the Lord whom she had so faithfully loved all her life.

'Jesus said to her "I am the resurrection and the life. Those who believe in me, even though they die, will live, and everyone who lives and believes in me will never die."

John 11:25-26