

Victoria Moreno



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Victoria Moreno, lovingly known in our church community at Our Lady of Guadalupe, as Sister Joseph was summoned home by our Lord and Savior Thursday Jan. 21. Her funeral Mass took place Saturday Jan. 23.

Sister Joseph was the third oldest in a family of 13. Her passion for family stemmed from the deeply-rooted religious convictions her family embraced. That sense of spirituality was further enriched at St. Mary's High School in Port Arthur. During her schools days she and her best friend and classmate Alma Reyna often spoke of one day entering a convent and devoting their lives to religious education of young children.

Meanwhile during WW II, in Roma, Texas, a young priest, the Rev. Paul Lewis, organized a group of Catechist nuns to assist him with his work among the youth of his parish. He named the new order Sisters of Saint John Bosco, after the Italian priest who attained sainthood for his work among homeless children and delinquents. He advertised in Catholic newspapers throughout the country and the response was far-reaching. Young women from Minnesota, New York and Ohio responded to his call as did some from Texas. One of the first to respond was Sister Joseph's friend Alma Reyna.

In 1946, Rev. Lewis was assigned to Our Lady of Guadalupe parish here in Taylor. The Sisters of Saint John Bosco followed him here.

After the war the convent on Washington Heights was build to house the nuns. There they prayed, studied and prepared their lessons focusing on helping the parish youngsters to grow up to be good and decent adults and progress in their religious faith. In 1951, another young woman from Port Arthur arrived at the convent steps. Victoria Moreno was greeted at the door by her life-long friend Alma Reyna who had taken the religious name of Sister John. Over the years their numbers increased to more than 10. However, changing times, health issues and death, the great equalizer, took its toll and their numbers decreased significantly.

Sister Joseph was the last of this heroic group of women who selflessly gave their lives to teach others to understand the responsibility of living in peace and harmony with all. The legacy of the Sisters of Saint John Bosco will live on for generations. Earlier this month the parish celebrated the groundbreaking of a new religious education center that will bear the name of The Sisters of Saint John Bosco.

We were truly blessed in being witnesses to the sweet soul of Victoria Moreno for over 65 years. Vaya con Dios, Que en paz descance. May you rest in Peace.

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