



**SISTER JEANNE MALLOY**  
**September 30, 1926 — March 7, 2006**



What a truly reverent and stunningly beautiful tribute our Sister Kwang-shim gave to our Sister Jeanne Malloy during this liturgy! It was a “send-off” she, more than anyone else, would have loved and appreciated! We are all most grateful to you, dear Sister! Since our Korean sisters and Korean music and customs were so very much a part of Sister Jeanne’s life, I wondered in the midst of the liturgy how you would say “Goodbye” in Korean for one who has said, “Yes” to God at so many junctures in her life. Would it be “aung-yang-hee -ka-ship-she-oh” which means literally, “May you go in peace?” Or would it be “aung-yang-hee-kay-ship-she-o” “May you remain in peace?” Really, both greetings of parting could be appropriate for Sister Jeanne. For we, by this Eucharistic celebration, are saying “Go in Peace” to our Sister because God has called her home. But, on the other hand, her gentle, buoyant spirit will remain in our memories as long as we live here on Earth.

So often we’ve heard the expression, “Life’s a journey.” For Sister Jeanne Malloy that journey began and ended in Altoona but followed a most unusual, circuitous route! Yesterday when I was talking with Sister Catherine Mary, her sister’s faith-filled companion in spirit and actuality almost throughout her entire life, if she remembered the send-off launching Sister Jeanne’s Korean adventures. Sister Catherine Mary and Sister Mary Agnes Schildkamp stood on the famous Fisherman’s Wharf edging San Francisco Bay as Sister Jeanne, aka Sister Emmanuel and I sailed off on the freighter, the Washington Bear, knifing through the murk of the pea-soup thick fog of the Bay. Destination, Korea. Yes, we left in a fog and arrived in a snow storm. And, because of a mix-up, no one from Kang Jin met us.

Sister Jeanne was abruptly thrust from teaching music in local schools staffed by our Community in Pennsylvania to teaching at Saint Joseph Middle and High School in Kang Jin, a Korean town bordering the Yellow Sea. With the help of our pioneering Sister Alice Ruane, Sister Jeanne, deftly adapted her whole piano curriculum in that totally different environment. She capitalized on our Korean students’ love and admiration of music in forms of singing and playing the piano.

With space at a premium at our school (Sisters, you remember that we Sisters missioned to Korea occupied several classrooms in the school as our convent) Sister Jeanne, needing privacy for her piano students, had a plywood “studio” built on the landing between the first and second floor of the new school building. It enclosed the imported Yamaha piano but there was barely room enough for Sister Jeanne to direct her student. However, it served another purpose as well. For after the structure had been used for several weeks, Sister Jeanne discovered its roof provided a convenient lookout for our cats. They would leap from the stairs to the studio roof often providing an erratic thumping background beat to the piano rhythms within.

As a piano teacher, Sister Jeanne’s pleasant, gentle personality could be deceiving for she did not hesitate to encourage her students to strive for excellence. And she got it! She herself was a consummate musician with a lovely singing voice and melodious interpretations of piano music. Eventually she became the glee club director, too. Imagine conducting a choir in a foreign language! Fortunately she had a very competent Korean music teacher, Cecilia Kim as well as Sister Alice, to help her. Years later, Sister Jeanne guided the Sisters Choir at the Provincial

House in the city of Gwangju. Whatever she did, she did with gracious aplomb! Inevitably audience appreciation generated and spread her excellent reputation past the school halls reaching throughout the Kun (county). That inevitably led to compiling a long waiting list of prospective piano students.

All during her 25 years as a missionary to the Land of the Morning Calm, she had the vigorous support and enduring love, not only of her students and Korean Sisters but also of her wonderful, Altoona born and bred family! I remember meeting her parents, John and Erma at our “Departure Ceremony” in 1962. Her three sisters, especially Sister Catherine Mary, and three brothers were frequently in touch with her while she was overseas. Her sister, Patricia’s husband, Don, even came to Korea for a visit. The US Army paid his way!

Sister Jeanne’s life of service did not end when she returned to the United States in 1991. But, after a short time as a classroom teacher at McNelis School in Altoona, she became the Pastoral Minister at Valley View Nursing Home where she daily distributed the Holy Eucharist to its 45 patients and spent the remainder of her day listening to individual patients with compassion, kindness and humility. During that time, we’d meet the two Malloy Sisters at as many Community gatherings as they could get to. As for me, personally, Sister Jeanne would write briefly her “year-in-review” annually on my birthday card. Since she was a deeply committed person and a wonderful “Community woman,” you can be sure that my greeting card was not the only one she sent regularly!

Like many of us, Sister Jeanne loved the traditions surrounding the celebration of the Christmas season. In Korea in the mid-1960s, she wanted some of her student-singers—and any Sister who wished to join them—to do some Christmas caroling in and around our town of Kang Jin. We American Sisters were, to say the least, skeptical. Christmas carols for the mostly Buddhist population??? Sister Jeanne, undaunted, went ahead with her plans and, guess what, Christmas caroling became one of the traditions of the students and Sisters of Saint Joseph School!

Another way Sister Jeanne evangelized both the school and its environs were Christmas musical presentations by our students. Most vivid in my memory was her first production of Carlo Menotti’s one-act Christmas opera, “Amahl and the Night Visitors.” The audience, seated on the floor as close together as possible, packed the auditorium! Who translated the English lyrics into Korean I don’t remember but you can be sure Sister Jeanne wanted this audience to really get the Christian message! I know most of you are familiar with the denouement of this musical masterpiece. Amahl, after the defense of his mother who is accused of trying to steal the gold of the three kings is miraculously cured of his lameness. He discards his crutch and dances ecstatically across the room. Then he begs his mother to allow him to accept the invitation of the Kings to accompany them as they follow the guiding star in search of the Infant King. Reluctantly she relents and consents to Amahl’s leaving. Now mother and son sing a poignant parting duet. “I shall miss you very much!” they tenderly sing to each other. Our dear Sister Jeanne spent her life searching for Jesus. Now she has been called to discard the crutch of earthly life to accept the fullness of the Kingdom. All of us here and all those she has helped through the years are singing from the depths of our hearts, “Sister Jeanne, we shall miss you very much!”

