

May 13, 2024

Dear Associates and Sisters,

Valentina (Tina) Benallie died suddenly the evening of May 12, 2024.

A long time Associate with the Sisters of St. Francis, Tina was an active member of St. Mary Mission parish in Tohatchi, New Mexico. She was a trained catechist, lector, extraordinary Eucharistic minister, and often served as sacristan and acolyte for services at the parish. She was a frequent participant at weekday liturgies and regularly spent time in adoration. Tina was a member of the parish Legion of Mary and was recently elected vice president of the regional chapter.



Tina was rightfully proud of her Native American heritage. She was active in St. Michael Kateri Circle, dedicated to promoting the recognition of outstanding indigenous Catholics, and a regular attendee at Kateri Conferences across the country. She attended the canonizations of both Saints Katharine Drexel (2000) and Kateri Tekakwitha (2012) in Rome and was currently working toward the canonization of Nicolas Black Elk, a Lakota Sioux medicine man and Catholic.

In her spare time, Tina enjoyed taking Ministry classes, and building things with her hands. She had a deep faith and was grateful to the Oldenburg Franciscan's for their example. Tina was currently serving as her sister JoAnn's contact person as JoAnn discerned her commitment to the Associate Relationship. The two had their tickets purchased and were excited to make the August trip to Oldenburg.

When Valentina signed her Associate Commitment in 2011, she was committed to sharing her gifts, talents, and prayers through mission work along with continuing to grow spiritually with the charism of Francis and Clare in her heart.

Valentina and JoAnn were here in Oldenburg for the Associates 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary celebration. She had a great visit and was looking forward to the day she could come back.

Our condolences to her family, Legion, Kateri and Associate friends. She will be missed.

Sr. Miriam Kaeser & Jane Schaefer