

### **With a Thankful Heart from my Family and Myself**

My dear brothers and sisters,

I want to express my most sincere gratitude and love to each one of you for all the outpouring of prayers, words of comfort and sympathy that you have offered for my mother who passed away on December 27th, for my family and me at this time of great grief and pain. I have no words to thank you enough. It is hard just to express how much your words of loving support meant to me during the most difficult time in my life. Losing my beloved mother had been unbelievably hard. I am still struggling from day to day. Her death due to Covid made it intensely painful for all of us in the family as none of us were able to hold her hand, give her a kiss and be by her side when she needed us the most in hospital, and later made it harder being unable to give her a fitting farewell-funeral service. In my grief, pain, darkness, and loneliness, know that each of you have been my own family present to me to lean on and remove these fears and brought strength and comfort.

I am aware that many in Watsonville, within our parish, in our state, country and all over the world go through this pain of the loss of their dear ones due to this pandemic, my family and I join our pain with theirs and try to find meaning and strength in our Faith. I trust in God's words found in prophet Jeremiah, who says "For I know the plans I have for you," says the LORD. "They are plans for good and not for disaster, to give you a future and a hope". (Jeremiah 29:11) My personal experience of My Mother's death with Covid and all my family going through this sickness and consequences of it, makes me feel one with the pain, anxiety and fear of my brothers and sisters in and around us and all over the world. Please continue to pray for my mother's eternal repose and for my family for strength and comfort. A big thank you and a Hug to each of you. Sorry If I do not reach out personally to each of you to express my gratitude, please know that I am deeply thankful for all your expressions of love, sympathy, and prayer.

I am greatly thankful to Our bishops, Most Rev. Daniel Garcia, and Bishop Sylvester Rayan, Fr. Luis Oyarzo, Fr. Jose Shaji, Salesian Sisters, CMC Sisters from Hercules, and all my parish staff who with their Presence, Phone calls, and prayers stood close to me to comfort and support. Your kindness and goodness to me at this time of crisis is etched in my heart. THANK YOU.

***Fr. Joseph M. Paradayil, Pastor***