

All for Jesus through Mary

May 6, 1968

Dear Sisters:

This morning at 10:30 A.M. Sister Catherine Ann's sisters, Ann and Florence, with Ann's daughter and daughter-in-law, and Florence's husband, the sisters of Sister Mary Elizabeth Wengritzky, and a friend, joined us and the Capuchins in offering Sister's funeral Mass concelebrated by three priests. Another sister, Clara, was unable to be present because of her own serious illness.

We had all rejoiced on the feast of St. Monica to sing as Entrance Hymn "The strife is o'er, the battle won..." and to offer the "white" Mass for Sister on the day of her death. Sister's remains were welcomed by the community at Victory Noll Sunday at 10 A.M. Watch was kept during the day and night, and a Bible Service held in place of Matins at 7:30 P.M. on Sunday in a crowded Holy Family reception room.

On the First Saturday of May, 1968, at 3 o'clock in the morning, Our Blessed Mother took Sister Catherine Ann Larsen home. Sister Therese Martin, the only one with Sister at the time, tells us:

Sister Catherine Ann must have lost consciousness around midnight. Her body died by inches until her lungs filled with fluid and there was no more space to breathe. She slipped away quietly with no pain.

Sister Catherine Ann had been assigned fulltime to the Infirmary August 15, 1967. She had been anointed on March 23 of this year at her own request. Msgr. Yzermans, in the absence of Msgr. Conroy, anointed Sister on Friday, May 3, at 8:30 P.M. It was his first such experience in ten years. Sister Camilla relates that Sister Catherine Ann said, after this anointing: "He's going to take me tonight."

Mother Florentine (whom Sister recognized and whom she was happy to have present), the councilors, and other sisters, visited and prayed with Sister during the night. Most of the time Sister seemed asleep and relaxed; the convulsions that interrupted her sleep were followed by marked pauses in her labored breathing.

At 11:45 P.M. Msgr. Yzermans returned and prayed with the sisters until 1:00 A.M. Sister must have been pleased with this, for she had repeatedly asked for prayers. She received the Sacrament of Penance on Thursday and said that Father had given her only a little penance which she was not sure she had actually prayed.

Most of us know that Sister Catherine Ann passed many years in much physical suffering. Entering our congregation in 1930, Sister spent two years in Indiana Harbor, six years in Redlands, and two years in Brawley, before she was forced to return to Victory Noll because of ill health. "Accepting sickness as well as health as a gift from God," as our Founder taught us, Sister put her best efforts into the direction of the sewing room at Victory Noll during her remaining active years. But her heart was in the missions still, and she loved to recount her experiences. One of the pastors for whom Sister worked in California once remarked that no one knew what great good she did in her quiet way. Many whom she helped to heaven will be there to welcome her with deep gratitude.

Msgr. Conroy told us that Sister Catherine Ann had offered to pray for him and his work and he had seen signs of the efficacy of those prayers.

Sister Catherine Ann's patient suffering for so long is an example to us. May her prayers now bring us the graces we need for a deep spiritual renewal in our congregation.

Sister Margaret Ann, General Secretary