



SISTER MARY KATHLEEN RICE, OLVM

Sister Mary Kathleen Rice entered into the loving embrace of God at 1:15 a.m. Sunday morning, February 23, 2014.

Sister Mary Kathleen was born in St. Louis, Missouri, on June 11, 1923 the second of five daughters born to Edward S. and Mary Ellen (Dalton) Rice. She was baptized Kathryn Virginia at St. Agnes Catholic Church on June 16, 1923.

Sister Mary Kathleen was preceded in death by her parents and two sisters; Claire Bruce and Rosemary Balven. She is survived by two sisters; Patricia Schafers and Sister Jacquelyn Rice, BVM.

Sister Mary Kathleen entered the Congregation of Our Lady of Victory Missionary Sisters on October 27, 1944, and made first vows on August 5, 1947. Her first mission was in Detroit, Michigan, for three years and then she was off to Monterey, California. She served in the missions from California on the Pacific to New Jersey on the Atlantic, and from Florida to Michigan and lots of states in between including Nevada, Wyoming, Missouri, and Colorado. She also did work at Victory Noll several times during her ministry years, returning in 2012.

Sister Mary Kathleen had a wonderful sense of humor and an infectious love of life. You could not be around her for very long before a smile or a boisterous laugh would ensue. She was also lovingly called Sister Katie and only on formal occasions or in serious situations was referred to by her full religious name. This joyful personality was one of the many ways she was able to connect with people and form networks, some of which have lasted over many years and for some even decades. Not only was it an asset during her years as house superior, it was especially helpful in her ministry of religious education, parish pastoral ministry and then in her work at Holy Spirit Center in Denver, Colorado. The Center is dear to many Victory Noll sisters, because many sisters have either lived and or worked there since 1947. It was a place many sisters remember with fond memories because it was one of the locations for summer Victory Noll gatherings and regional meetings. Sister Katie was one of the last sisters to work at the Center and she helped to close our beloved Tremont House in 1999. She was very proud of the Victory Noll Sisters' involvement at the Center with the poor of Denver. These people held a very special place in Sister Katie's heart.

Sister Katie had a quick mind and one way she would use it was to figure out ways to add fun and entertainment to life. Sometimes that meant stretching the rules, but not breaking them. One example was shared at her wake about starting the "75 Miles Rule," a rule that stated that number of miles a sister could travel without special

permission. She suggested using the farthest mission and not the mission center house as the starting point. In one case it add an extra 35 miles, making the distance 110 instead of 75. There were many other stories of Sister Katie and her love of life shared as we gathered for her vigil and funeral.

Sister Katie's sister, Sister Jacquelyn Rice, BVM, Sister Marie Greaney, BVM and Gail Shinal joined the community for the vigil on Wednesday evening, February 26, 2014, and again on Thursday morning, February 27, 2014.

We had Irish music at the sharing of memories after the vigil with the singing of *Oh Danny Boy, I Will Take You Home Again Kathleen*, and the hymn, *Lady of Knock*. We ended the formal sharing with a hardy song, *Take Me Out to the Ball Game*. The first three songs were in honor of Katie's Irish heritage and great devotion to Lady of Knock, the last one for her great love of baseball, especially the St. Louis Cardinals. Sister Jacquelyn, Sister Katie's youngest sister, spoke about Katie taking her to softball games and buying her chocolate ice cream cones. Chocolate, as we all recalled, was also one of her greatest pleasures.

Father Dale Bauman was the presider for the Eucharistic celebration and Sister Jeanette Halbach, OLVM, gave the homily. In her reflection, Sister Jeanette spoke of friendship, the friendship that Jesus spoke of in the Gospel of John and also the friendship that Sister Katie had with Jesus that then in turn flowed into all her relationships. She continued with this theme of friendship and talked about a true friend of God as being one who was consistently joyful, something that Sister Katie certainly was throughout her life. In ending, Sister Jeanette mentioned that Sister Katie now joins all the Victory Noll "saints" in heaven and now we have a new patron "Saint of Friendship."

Sr. Mary Kathleen, in your years of service to God's people you brought laughter and joy, along with the gospel and a message of love and forgiveness. May you now be welcomed into Paradise and enjoy the fullness of God's presence for all eternity.

With a grateful heart,



Sr. Ginger Downey, OLVM

