



September 12, 1995.

Dear sisters:

"The Cross is my Salvation." Sister Clarissa entered eternal life with that firm faith on September 7, 1995. The presence of her Savior, His Cross and the beauties of this world had been her life.

Sister Clarissa Heckler was born in Milwaukee, Wisconsin to William and Margaret (John) Heckler on July 20, 1900. She was baptized July 29 in St. Francis Church, Milwaukee, the parish from which she entered Victory Noll. She was preceded in death by her parents and brother, Rev. Alphonse Heckler, O.F.M., Cap. She is survived by cousins and friends in Milwaukee.

While yet a teenager Sister Clarissa worked and was also teaching herself to type from borrowed texts. She began taking night classes and was soon working in an office as stenographer and bookkeeper.

Dreams became reality for Sister Clarissa through creativity and industriousness. She has told of her great desire to be able to play a musical instrument. She drew a facsimile of an organ keyboard on paper. She read notes well enough to be able to finger the music on the "artificial instrument." When this became known to a friend of the family she was offered opportunities in music. How pleasing it must have been to Our Lord to hear Sister's practice on a paper keyboard become church music in His missions. In her interesting stories one can understand how her education in youth became a service to others.

Her father died in 1916. Sister Clarissa and her mother were working. Father Alphonse was in the seminary. Sister felt called to the religious life also but delayed her own vocation until her brother's ordination. Father Alphonse was ordained to the priesthood in the Franciscan Capuchin order. It was a happy day for Sister and her mother. However, Mrs. Heckler was not well and Sister remained at home caring for her mother until her death in 1944.

Another dream came true when Sister Clarissa entered Our Lady of Victory Missionary Sisters on October 27, 1944. The effort, love and creativity that Sister had shown continued. She lived her calling in visits and teaching with an enthusiasm for the faith. She lived her calling in a garden of roses cultivating, watering and nurturing. This beauty awakened in many a greater appreciation of God's creation. Her friends were quick to support her in this project. She lived her calling in the offices of Victory Noll with an unusual devotion to files and records.

Sister Clarissa had been about her usual self lately until Wednesday, September 6. That afternoon she became restless and soon became critically ill and was anointed by Father Fahey. Sisters sat with her hour by hour until 5:25, Thursday morning when she took her last breath. Sisters Evelyn Marie Davis, Monica Haines, John Francis Radler and nurses were with her. She died peacefully.

The body arrived at Memorial Chapel Friday afternoon and at 4:30 we gathered for rosary.

The wake at 7:30 that evening was beautiful. Sister Marie Celine Ernst led the prayers and Sister Mary Joan Ginsterblum read Scripture.

The Mass of the Resurrection on Saturday morning at 10:30 was presided by Father Thomas Fahey. We were glad to have Father Thomas Zelinski, OFM, Cap. with us. Our Sisters and Associates from Chicago and Fort Wayne areas were here for retreat and attended Mass also. Classmates, Sister Martha Wordeman gave a meaningful homily, Sisters Henrietta Wilke and Josephine Konrad carried the gifts. Sister Marie Schene was the first reader and Sister Anna Marie Richter was second. Intercessions were prepared by Sister Florentine Lohr and read by Sister Francene Merkosky.

The hymn, Sion Sing, was sung as the Recessional moved to the gathering place for departure from the chapel. The bell tolled as we walked to the cemetery.

"The Cross is my Salvation" reminds us of you, Sister Clarissa. May you inherit the Kingdom prepared for you. For this we pray.

Sincerely in Jesus and Mary,

Sister Marjorie Curran
General Secretary