



December 11, 1995

"I am the way, the truth
and the life says the Lord.
No one comes to the Father
except through me."
(Gospel Acclamation)

Dear Sisters:

Advent season commenced at Victory Noll this year as the Father called one of us who had often responded through Jesus. Sister Cordelia Marie Bahl was the one to answer the call about 9:00 o'clock Sunday morning, December 3, 1995. She had been very weak for two days. Sisters were sitting with her during the day and night. At times she seemed aware of the Sisters and was comfortable. She was quiet and peaceful as she left this world to go to the Father.

Sister Cordelia Marie was born September 6, 1905 in Hays, Kansas to Joseph and Anna Wasinger Bahl. She entered Our Lady of Victory Missionary Sisters Congregation on January 1, 1925 and made profession of vows February 11, 1927. She ministered in religious education and various pastoral programs in Indiana, California, Texas, Arizona and Colorado before retiring to Victory Noll in 1984. She had been unable to join in any of the celebrations the past two years but her 70th jubilee was recognized this year by the community with Mass and prayers for her intentions.

Sister Cordelia Marie had lived a full life of good will to all. One of her pleasures was to lovingly tell of her family from Hays, Kansas. Her parents were born in Russia. They had fifteen children: Joseph died at birth; Lawrence and Wilfred drowned; Andrew died in the Battle of the Bulge, Germany in 1944; Elizabeth entered the Convent of St. Agnes, Fond du Lac, Wisconsin and was known as Sister Mark Bahl, CSA. Sister died at the age of 40. Surviving are: Richard of Hawthorne, Nevada; Agnes Bahl, Ellis, Kansas and Lucille Weissback, Salem Oregon.

In the steel mills area of East Chicago, Indiana, Sister was given the title of "La Madre de Los Mexicanos" or the Mother of the Mexicans.

The following is taken from an article written by Sister Mary Isabel Quinn for the Wyoming Catholic Register in 1985 entitled Women in the Church:

"Sister's last assignment was twelve years in the steel mill district. It was during this time that it was discovered she had emphysema. Sister would say, "I never smoked, my grandfather never smoked. Neither did my father nor my seven brothers but after spending about 30 years in the steel mill district breathing the air from the smoke stack there is no wonder I have emphysema.

In her home visits to the migrants she was like a motherly neighbor, offering home remedies for the sick that unattended could have developed into serious problems both physically and financially. She always discussed her work with doctors in the area who encouraged her to continue what she was doing. Mustard plasters for chest colds and Seven-Up for other ailments were part of the kit she carried in a car.

Sister literally lived the Beatitudes all of her religious life. When necessary she would take the sick to the doctor, provide food for the hungry, look for shelter for the homeless and beg for money for transportation for those able to continue their travels back home to Texas.

Sister ministered to workers in the fields near Torrington, Wyoming. Sisters Josephine Cima, Theresa Egidy and Mary Isabel Quinn were her companions. They visited families and held religious education programs to prepare children and adults for the sacraments. Sister Josephine went to the market place each day. She took literature with her and watched for Texas car licenses. She was quick to make friends with the strangers and help with their needs. The Sisters gave the name Supermarket Literature Distribution Center to this area of the apostolate."

In Flagstaff, Holbrook and Tohatchi, Arizona, Sister ministered to the Native Americans. Her work there was an incredible accomplishment.

Sister Cordelia Marie's body was returned to Victory Noll Monday afternoon. We gathered for rosary at 4:30 in the chapel. Father Fahey celebrated the Mass of the Resurrection Tuesday and gave us an interesting and inspiring homily relating Sister's call and the Advent season we were beginning. Mr. Bruce Brown, a nephew of Sister, was lector. Sisters Martha Wordeman, Judith Turmock, Rose Zita Rosonke and Dolores Carlos were with us. The Final Commendation prayers were in the gathering space because of weather conditions. Many sisters and Bruce Brown walked to the cemetery.

Eternal rest grant unto her, O Lord, and let perpetual light shine upon her.

Sincerely in Jesus and Mary,

Sister Marjorie Curran
General Secretary