



SISTER DENNIS KERR, OLV M, 97, a resident of Saint Anne Communities at Victory Noll, Huntington, Indiana, died peacefully the evening of Monday, December 4, 2023.

Sister Dennis Kerr was born in Detroit, Michigan, on October 21, 1926, to William Kerr and Florence (Roberts) Kerr. She was baptized Helen Mary on June 3, 1934, at St. Mary's Church in Morris, Michigan. She was the ninth of William and Florence's ten children. Five sisters, Florence Reeser, Stella Stuart, Mary Ellen Sommerville, Dorothy Maloney, and Josephine Kudla, along with four brothers, George Kerr, James Kerr, Robert Kerr and William Kerr Borle, preceded her in death. Surviving Sr. Dennis are her sister in-law, Gertrude Borle, nieces and nephews, along with her Victory Noll Sisters with whom she shared life and community for 75 years.

Sr. Dennis entered the Congregation of Our Lady of Victory Missionary Sisters on October 30, 1947, and made first vows August 5, 1950. She served in the states of Utah, Nevada, Wyoming, Michigan, New Jersey, California and Colorado. Sister served in the ministry of catechetics and trained hundreds, maybe even thousands of altar boys. She was especially good with them because she knew all the tricks they might play. Perhaps she was also good with them because of growing up with brothers who also played tricks.

A co-worker and friend from New Jersey commented that Sr. Dennis was a hard worker and deeply cared about people, and they had many laughs together. In the last years before she retired, Sr. Dennis ministered at the Holy Spirit Outreach Center in Denver, Colorado. An associate from Colorado described her as a "wonderful person with a delightful sense of humor and a great smile." Dennie, as she was lovingly called, was blessed to live and minister with her dear friend, Sr. Kathleen (Katie) Rice, for many years. Dennie and Katie returned to Victory Noll in 2012.

The Sisters gathered on Monday afternoon, December 11, 2023, to begin the rituals of farewell with the vigil service. Sr. Judith Ann Turnock gave Dennie's eulogy. She shared how she and Dennie loved to watch the Lawrence Welk show. Dennie would speak of Joe Feeney, the American tenor who crooned "Danny Boy" and other Irish standards. Her grandmother came from County Cork in Ireland and Dennie was very proud of her Irish heritage. She enjoyed and appreciated when the staff or Sr. Judy would play Irish music in her room.

On Tuesday morning, December 12, the Feast of Our Lady of Guadalupe, the Sisters participated in the funeral liturgy in the Archbishop Noll Memorial Chapel at Victory

Noll. Family, friends and associates unable to attend in person were able to join the funeral liturgy via livestream. The service included music and readings that Dennie had chosen.

Rev. Tony Steinacker presided at the funeral liturgy and gave the homily. He spoke of how the conversations he had with Dennie in her last days reminded him of the Gospel passage she chose for the funeral Mass, about the Road to Emmaus, for Christ is the unseen guest at every table and the unheard participant in each and every conversation. Fr. Tony also shared that often when he stopped to visit Dennie, someone else was also visiting her, seeking guidance or asking her to pray for them or for a need they had. He asked her if she minded these requests and she got a strong look upon her face, leaned forward and said, "Of course I do not mind. I want to pray for them or their needs. It gives me joy and it gives my day purpose. I am honored to be asked and entrusted with these prayers." Then, she took a breath and eased back into a restful position in her chair. It was like she was energized by these brief meetings, interactions and prayers. Fr. Tony also pointed out that in her 75 years of service and living in Community, Sr. Dennie exemplified the values and way of life of the Victory Noll Sisters. He said that her family can be proud of Dennie and all she did when out on mission and finally, these last 11 years as she served the needs of each of us.

Dennie, we now pray with you the chorus of the song, Lady of Knock.

"Golden Rose, Queen of Ireland,
all my cares and troubles cease.
As we kneel with love before You,
Lady of Knock, my Queen of Peace."

And finally, Dennie, thank you for your life and love. "May the road rise up to meet you. May the wind be always at your back. May the sunshine be warm upon your face, and rains fall soft upon your fields. And until we meet again, may God hold you in the palm of His hand."

With Gratitude and Blessings,

Sister Beatrice Haines, O.L.V.M.

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