

November 28, 2008

Dear Sisters, Associates, Family and Friends,

SISTER MILDRED WEBER retired to Victory Noll in the year 2000, where she continued volunteering and assisting sisters with various needs, especially those who had just retired or were discerning how to most beneficially spend their retirement years. In 2004 she moved to Holy Family Health Care Center 3rd floor. At first, she was able to walk and communicate with the sisters and staff, and participated at the Camilla Center. Mildred was peaceful, pleasant and caring towards everyone. During the last three years, Sister Mildred's condition worsened and she became total care. Sisters visited with her and prayed with her. She was wheeled into the Hospice Sing Along on Thursday evenings and we hope that she enjoyed being with the sisters and listening to the songs. Recently she was unable to eat, and became very weak, and was confined to bed. On the evening of November 22, it was evident that Mildred was dying. Sisters went in to pray and watch with her. At 11:15 p.m. Mildred went peacefully home to God. Sister Gertrude Sullivan was with her when she died.



Sister was born October 4, 1920 in Vandalia, Montana, to Rudolph R. Weber and Reva Mae Stewart Weber. She was the oldest of five children: herself, a brother Jimmy Weber, two half-brothers John Stewart Hyatt, and James Stewart Hyatt, and a half-sister Vivian Stewart who died in infancy. Surviving Sister Mildred are her brother J.R. Weber of Independence, Missouri, and her two half-brothers, John Hyatt of Santa Clara, CA, and James Hyatt of Ogden, UT.

Sister Mildred shared that during her third year of high school she went to see Fr. Anthony Blaufuss, Pastor of St. Joseph's Church in Topeka, Kansas. She wanted to speak with him about her desire to work among the Native Americans in the Southwest after graduation, perhaps as a nurse. Little did she know of Father's knowledge of an admiration for the Missionary Catechists of Our Lady of Victory. During the conversation, Father asked if she had ever thought of becoming a Religious Sister. She told Father that she knew very little about Sisters except that they taught in Catholic Schools. He told her to pray about this. He also told her about the Missionary Catechists. The seed was planted. Soon after, she returned to tell Father that she wanted to become a Sister Catechist. Arrangements were made and Mildred entered Victory Noll on October 28, 1939. She pronounced her First Vows on August 5, 1942 and her Perpetual Vows on August 5, 1948.

Mildred served in the missions in California, Nevada, Indiana, Utah, Wyoming and Arizona. In 1973 Mildred was asked to return to Victory Noll where she served as Head Cook in Holy Family dining room until 1980. She was an excellent and well-organized cook, and served delicious meals.

Sister Mildred loved Wyoming, one of her mission assignments, and spent a number of years there. She served as a Pastoral Associate/Administrator of St. Anthony's Parish while also doing Religious Education and Pastoral Ministry in four other churches in the area. In addition to her administrative abilities, the following story sent to us by e-mail from her sister-in-law Cecilia Weber demonstrates her caring, counseling skills, and her desire to be a reconciler. Jim and Cecilia were visiting Mildred in Wyoming. A couple from the Parish came by with some garden produce for Mildred. While the husband was unloading the produce, Cecilia stayed by the car and talked with the wife. She said, "You don't know how much good Sister Mildred has done since she has been here." Then she shared how she and another woman did not get along, they did not care for each other and probably were not speaking. This was known throughout the Parish. When Sister Mildred found out she said, "This won't do." She had both women in counseling sessions assisting them in talking out their differences. Their reconciliation, respect and acceptance of one another happened after very hard work. When Cecilia told Mildred of her conversation with the women and that she said the counseling sessions were hard work but successful, Mildred replied "She worked, let me tell you with those two, I worked."

Sister Mildred's concern for the homeless, the hungry, and those suffering from the hardships of poverty was evidenced in her service in managing the St. Vincent de Paul Store in Salt Lake City, Utah. Mildred described her work as part of the compassionate ministry of the church. "We show kindness to all people, we let them know that they are human beings." At times she would allow people to work there for food and lodging. She told the story of one couple, an older woman married to a younger man, who needed clothing and lodging. They worked a few days then set out for Kansas City. After a few weeks the F.B.I. called to verify that the couple was working at St. Vincent's. They said the man was wanted in the investigation of the murder of a family. He was a suspect, and the murder had taken place in the mountains of central California. The F.B.I. called Mildred again after she left Utah, but she never found out how the story ended.

In 1997, Sister Mildred was appointed by the Team as Field Consultant for Ministry/Retirement. She went to various locations to assist sisters who were considering retirement and needed help in discerning and in preparing for the move. Sister Mildred was a great help to many sisters in evaluating their options helping them sort, dispose of things, and pack. She made possible an easier transition to a new way of life for them.

Sister Mildred's family members were unable to attend her funeral due to the long distance in travel. They sent two lovely bouquets of flowers. We also received several e-mails from family members expressing their love and respect for Mildred, and their gratitude to the Victory Noll Sisters for the excellent care and love Mildred received at Holy Family.

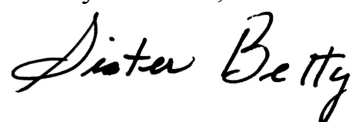
During the Vigil on Tuesday evening, we shared the e-mails sent by the family. One of these sent by Mildred's niece Kathy, described how she brought her young son Niklas to meet Sister Mildred for the first time. He was about 8 years old and was not acquainted with Nuns. She said to break the ice Mildred asked him if he would like to see a card trick. Of course he would. To his delight Mildred taught him many tricks. He continued playing these tricks on his parents for many months. How creative and sensitive Sister Mildred was in establishing a friendship with this young grandnephew. Her niece Kathy ended her message by saying, "While I will certainly miss receiving her letters and thoughtfully written notes, I can well imagine and see Sister Mildred calmly and patiently shuffling a deck of cards and swapping card tricks with the angels and saints in heaven."

Another niece Peg Gardner shared through her e-mail that on Saturday evening while attending 5 o'clock Mass, they played "I Heard the Voice of Jesus Say," as an entrance hymn. As Peg started to sing she had an overwhelming feeling of Jesus calling to Sister Mildred telling her it is time to come home. Peg was deeply moved by this, and felt she was witnessing a very precious moment. That evening Sister Mildred went home to God.

Wednesday morning Sister Mildred was laid to rest. After a beautiful Mass of Resurrection, we processed to the cemetery for the final prayer and blessing. We sang our hymn to Mary "We Have a Holy Mother." We continued to celebrate Mildred's life as we shared a delicious meal together.

Mildred, we thank you for sharing your life with us. Now you can say "I looked to Jesus and I found Him my star, my sun, and in that light of life I walked, my traveling days are done."

Sincerely in Christ,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Sister Betty". The signature is written in black ink and is positioned below the typed name.

Sr. Betty Anderson, OLVM
General Secretary