



**SISTER VALERIA FOLTZ, OLVM**, 105, a resident of Heritage Pointe, Warren, died peacefully May 13, 2025. She had been anointed recently by Fr. Tony Steinecker and able to participate in the Eucharist up to a few days before her death.

Sister Valeria was born in Humphrey, Nebraska, on November 12, 1919, to Stephen Foltz and Mary Wemhoff Foltz. She was the ninth of 13 children. Eight brothers, Henry, Paul, Joseph, Alfred, William, Clement, Stanley and Wilfred Foltz, and four sisters, Eleanor Eisenmenger, Ludwina Foltz, Dorothy Wessel, and

Philomae Zabawa preceded her in death.

Sister Valeria entered the Congregation of Our Lady of Victory Missionary Sisters on October 28, 1941, and made her first vows on August 5, 1944. She served in California, Indiana, Pennsylvania, Michigan, Texas, Ohio, and Nebraska. Valeria returned to Victory Noll in 2000 and shared her life and love for crafts, sewing, and numerous activities with the Sisters at Victory Noll. In February 2024, she made yet one more move with 11 other Victory Noll Sisters to Heritage Pointe in Warren when Saint Anne's at Victory Noll closed. One of the first places she wanted to visit in her new residence was the craft shop!

Sr. Valeria greatly appreciated visits and phone calls from sisters, family and friends. The family's celebration of her 105<sup>th</sup> birthday in October, as well as the second birthday party on November 12, were very special to her.

One of the stories Sister Valeria enjoyed sharing was how she had been inspired to think about a religious vocation. In 1937, an uncle of the Foltz siblings, a Franciscan priest missioned to St. Peter Parish in Chicago, died at the early age of 45. Moved by this sudden loss in their lives, young Valeria was moved to pray with these words: "Dear Lord, I want to take his place in Your Vineyard."

Two years later, 20-year-old Valeria accompanied her older brother and his wife on a trip to Ohio. Their route took them past Victory Noll, and the life size white statue of the Sacred Heart of Jesus did not escape their sight. Sister Valeria remembered exclaiming, "Oh, what a beautiful place it is up there." A couple of years later, she was speaking with a Franciscan priest friend about the kind of ministerial work she wanted to do. He pulled out a brochure of Victory Noll and she recalled the place they had passed on their way to Ohio, with the beautiful statue of the Sacred Heart on it with its outstretched arms in a sign of welcome.

The 22-year-old entered the Our Lady of Victory Missionary Sisters October 28, 1941, to begin her journey as a missionary Catechist. Her first mission was to Redlands, California, where she joined 20 other Victory Noll Sisters living at "Queen of the Missions." She recalled the time spent looking for suitable locations to catechize the children. They had to resort to private homes, garages, barns, or the great outdoors.

One of her favorite mission locations was St. Marcellinus in the city of Commerce, California. She came to St. Marcellinus in 1970 and stayed until 1993. She was a very active parish member as Religious Education Coordinator, visiting the sick and elderly and actively participating in all aspects of parish life. Upon departure from St. Marcellinus, the City Council presented her with a commendation.

After five years of ministry in Nebraska, Sister Valeria returned to Victory Noll in 2000. During her “retirement” she was one of the Victory Noll Sisters who catechized the migrant children who came to Bluffton with their parents who worked in the tomato factory. But most of her time was spent sewing Raggedy Ann and Andy dolls and sharing them with hospitalized children at Lutheran Hospital. Her crafts were also shared with Love, Inc. and sold at the Treasure Box at St. Anne’s at Victory Noll.

Victory Noll Sisters and a few associates, friends and family gathered on May 19, 2025, for a Vigil Service. Many more members of Valeria’s large and loving family as well as additional associates and friends were present for the funeral liturgy the next morning, in addition to 20-25 persons who were able to join the liturgy via livestream. Msgr. Mike Foltz, Sr. Valeria’s nephew, presided at the funeral liturgy and gave the homily. Fr. Tony Steinecker of SS. Peter and Paul Parish in Huntington, asked if he could join Monsignor in celebrating the Mass. Then the day of the funeral, Fr. Evaristo Olivera of St. Mary’s Parish in Huntington also joined Msgr. Foltz and Fr. Steinecker.

Sr. Valeria chose the following quote from Scripture to be included on her Mass Program. It speaks so well of Valeria’s loving life of service in response to God’s great love for her.

“The way we came to know love was that he laid down his life for us;  
so we ought to lay down our lives for our brothers and sisters.

If someone who has worldly means sees a brother  
or sister in need and refuses them compassion,  
How can the love of God remain in him?  
Children, let us love not in word or speech  
But in deed and truth.”

1 John 3:16-18

With Gratitude and Blessings,

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

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