



April 25, 1998

"You have given me life"  
and  
"I will proclaim..."  
(from refrain for  
recessional)

Dear Sisters:

The combination of the above sentences caught my eye as I opened the liturgy sheet for Sr. Cecilia Marie's funeral a few weeks ago. Exactly your past, Cecilia Marie.

Sr. Cecilia Marie Renk died at Lutheran Hospital in Ft. Wayne March 28, 1998. She fell Saturday, March 21, and broke two bones in her left arm. She visited the doctor who could do nothing until the swelling subsided. A night or so later she was suffering from pain in her side and was taken to the hospital. The arm was given the care needed. Tests showed a large cell carcinoma pelvis (a growth in abdomen) and was the cause of her death Saturday, noon, 12:05 p.m. Sister had not been well for several weeks. She died peacefully. Her sister, Sr. Victoire Renk, SND with companion, Sr. Mary Rena arrived at the hospital a short time later. Bishop John D'Arcy was visiting in the hospital that morning and had anointed Sister.

This child born to Leo and Mary (Schneider) Renk January 4, 1916 was baptized Cecilia Elisabeth in the Church of St. Francis, Cleveland, Ohio, January 9, 1916.

She attended St. Francis School and St. Francis Commercial in Cleveland. She was secretary to the registrar of Notre Dame College, So. Euclid, before entering Our Lady of Victory Missionary Sisters congregation October 28, 1942.

Sr. Cecilia Marie pronounced first vows August 5, 1945. She had been missioned in California, Nevada, Michigan, Ohio, Florida and Wyoming. Her ministry in religious education developed into different phases as the years unfolded and her experience gave her new insights. As a member of the National Apostolate with Mentally Retarded Persons she was working with those programs in parishes. She was consultant to the Diocesan Education Office in Cheyenne in this area.

While she cared for her mother at Victory Noll she was limited in her mission ministry. However in 1979 the director of special education for Huntington County Community Schools invited Sister to

"tape books." The department furnished materials and Sister read onto tapes. These "books" were kept in the County. The name of the "book" was listed by the State for all school systems to borrow.

As late as February 1998, Sister received a certificate for a 32-hour course in Mediating Interpersonal Conflict.

She helped a committee serve a fund-raising supper given for the support of programs of senior citizens in our county. She also gave some time to be greeter at a booth during a weekend exposition. All within this year.

The body of Sr. Cecilia Marie was brought to Memorial Chapel Monday afternoon for the wake that evening, March 30. Sisters Margaret Hess, Jane Therese, Mary Barbara and Jeanine arrived from the motherhouse of Notre Dame Sisters in Chardon, Ohio to be with Sr. Victoire.

Present also for funeral services were: Srs. Rita Musante, Judy Turnock, Martha Wordeman, Angline Walczyk of Fort Wayne; Dolores Carlos of Syracuse; Father Thomas Zelinski of St. Peter and Paul, Helen Eisenhauer, Joan McClure, Pamela Pranger, Cathy Drees, Madonna Jeffers of Huntington; Barbara Trickey of Mason, Michigan, and Shelley Woenker and family of Hicksville, Ohio. Also present were representatives of Huntington Mediation Center and Huntington County Council on Aging.

On Tuesday morning Father Fahey presided at the funeral liturgy. The music, singing and reading contributed to a beautiful reflection. A few thoughts from Father's homily: "Sr. Cecilia Marie was a living embodiment of the Eight Beatitudes;" "She reflected Jesus;" "Jesus grasped her by the arm over fifty years ago;" "He has grasped her again today." Five of the classmates were present to participate: Sr. Carolyn Issenmann, Eucharistic minister; Sr. Mary Magdalen Heim, schola and played a violin; Sr. Joachim Stetar, Sr. Mary Cecilia Niehaus and Sr. Mary Dolores Kotas placed the pall and symbol.

The weather was mild as we walked to the cemetery for the service.

We miss you, Sister Cecilia Marie. You left so soon. We are sure you, in the Communion of Saints, are safe, happy and contented. Pray for us on our journey, please. Christ's Peace.

Sincerely

*Sister Marjorie Curran*  
Sr. Marjorie Curran  
General Secretary