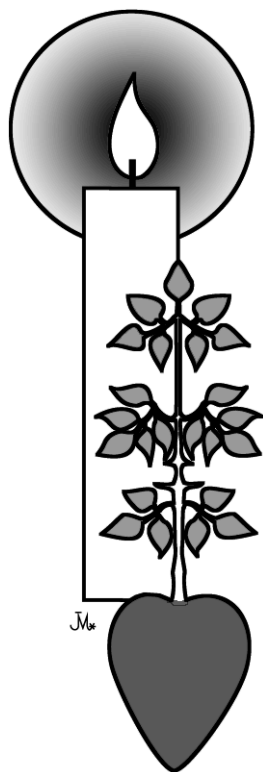


August 13, 2008

Dear Sisters, Family, Associates and Friends,

SISTER AGNES GANSE had been feeling poorly for a few days before her death. On Wednesday evening she joined the Hospice sing-along group in Holy Family 3<sup>rd</sup> floor lounge. She was unable to take an active part but when asked, nodded that she enjoyed being present. The following evening she had difficulty breathing and was taken to Parkview Hospital. Sister was visited in the morning by Sisters Jeanette Halbach and Gertrude Sullivan and was anointed by Fr. Pfister who was at the hospital. Sister Agnes died peacefully in the afternoon on Friday, August 8, with our Associate Barbara Bidwell at her side. Sister had told those who visited her that day, "I am going to die today." God called her home just as she stated.



Sister Agnes had been living in Holy Family 3<sup>rd</sup> floor for 10 years. When she first came to Holy Family 3<sup>rd</sup> floor she was quite active, always trying to make things pleasant for those around her. Sister would get up early in the morning and make a pot of coffee for Sisters who might enjoy a cup before breakfast. She wanted to be connected with everything that was happening both at Victory Noll and in the Missions.

During the past year she became increasingly weaker and quite frail, but always had a pleasant smile or word for those who visited her.

Sister Agnes was born on March 7, 1914 in Lancaster, PA to John Michael Ganse and Christine Kirchner Ganse and baptized Agnes Frances on March 15 at St. Joseph's Church.

Agnes was the 6<sup>th</sup> of 10 children, 3 brothers and 6 sisters. Two brothers, William and John Michael Jr., and five sisters Mary Josefa, Catherine Marie, OLVN, Siena Rose, Christina Rita, and Rita Bernadette preceded her in death. She is survived by her sister, Gertrude Helfrich of Lancaster, PA and her brother Bernard Ganse of Hershey, PA.

Sister Agnes attended Lancaster Catholic High School. At the age of 21 applied to enter Victory Noll and was accepted in February 1936. Sister completed her courses at Victory Noll Junior College. She also received certification in Home Hygiene and Care of the Sick from the American Red Cross, Huntington in 1938.

Sister made her first vows on August 5, 1939. She served in the missions of Indiana, New Mexico, California, and Arizona. From 1969-1980 she served on the Staff at Victory Noll. Agnes was generous and joyful in using her gifts and talents in service at Victory Noll. She managed the Printing Office for several years. She printed the Missionary Catechist with its interesting mission stories which many of us looked forward to reading. The Novices would help Sister Agnes fold the Missionary Catechist, and she always gave them a candy treat when they finished their work.

Sister also acted as Buyer at Victory Noll, and was in charge of the cars.

She was local councillor and later Superior at Victory Noll for several years.

In 1980 Sister was missioned to Tucson, AZ where she served until 1998. During her years in Tucson she was known for her generosity and hospitality. Agnes would visit people in their homes offering comfort and encouragement. She went to the Retirement Center weekly to pray the rosary and have a Communion Service with the residents. They spoke of how they looked forward to Sister coming. Agnes was also generous with her time and concern for our Sisters. She would offer to drive long distances to doctor appointments when Sisters needed her assistance.

When Sisters own health began to fail her doctor suggested swimming would be good therapy. He offered his swimming pool since he lived close by. Agnes found herself a swimsuit and went for this exercise with Sister Gertrude most afternoons. She was faithful to any exercise suggested to her even when she did not care to do them, because she did not want to be wheelchair bound.

In 1998 because of failing health Sister Agnes returned to Victory Noll to live.

Her sister, Gertrude, and her brother Bernard, six nieces and a nephew-in-law were able to come to celebrate with us Agnes' entrance into eternal life. The Vigil was on August 10, and at the reception after the vigil her nieces shared how Agnes gave a white rosary to each of them when they made their First Holy Communion. They each still have and cherish this rosary. Her sister Gertrude said Agnes was out-going and I was the quiet one, the homebody. Their mother died when they were very young, and an Aunt raised them. They were so close in age she dressed them like twins. However Agnes would be in blue and Gertrude pink. Agnes would say, "why can't I be in pink?"

Mass of the Resurrection was on Monday morning August 11. It was a beautiful sunny day, as we processed to the cemetery. After prayers, we sang "We Have a Holy Mother" and we each blessed the casket, commending our Sister to the loving embrace of God.

Agnes, we thank you for your love and service. We know God is saying to you, come faithful daughter you have served me well. Enter now into your eternal home and feast at the banquet of the Lord.

Sincerely in Christ,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Sister Betty". The script is cursive and elegant, with the first letter of "Sister" being a large capital 'S' and "Betty" written in a similar flowing style.

Sr. Elizabeth Anderson, OLVM  
General Secretary