

November 27, 2010

Dear Sisters, Associates, Family and Friends,

Sister Dorothy McMannon went peacefully home to God on Wednesday, November 24, 2010. Sister had been in poor health for a long time. For about a week, she accepted very little food, and was in bed most of the time. She had become critical and sisters were visiting her often and praying with her. On Wednesday morning Sister Alma was the last sister to visit and pray with her shortly before Mass. Soon after Alma left her room, Dorothy expired. Sister Dorothy had returned to Victory Noll in August after her sister Bitzy died. Both of them had been living at the Ursuline Retirement Center in Louisville, Kentucky. Sister Marilyn and Sister Grace Marie went to Louisville to bring Dorothy home to Victory Noll. Many times on the way back Dorothy expressed gratitude to them for coming to get her. She was ready and happy to come home to Victory Noll.

Sister Dorothy was born in Louisville, Kentucky on August 24, 1921, to George and Elizabeth Weisbecker McMannon. Her parents, four brothers, George, Thomas, William, and Raymond, and three sisters, Mary Catherine, Elizabeth and Mary McMannon, preceded her in death.

Dorothy entered the Congregation of Our Lady of Victory Missionary Sisters on October 30, 1940. She made her first Profession of Vows on August 5, 1943 and her Perpetual Vows on August 5, 1949 in Redlands, California. Sister Dorothy shares that concern for others was always a strong family value. She states that during her school years, she listened to and was inspired by talks given by Missionaries about their experiences in the missions. She offered daily prayer for the missions, and with other schoolmates raised money for the poor. From her youth Dorothy felt called to be a Missionary, and her desire was to serve in the Home Missions. After college Dorothy felt an even stronger desire to serve God as a Home Missionary. After a time of discerning where God was leading her she requested and was accepted to enter Victory Noll.



Sister Dorothy served in the Missions of Ohio, California, Utah, Indiana, Michigan, and Kentucky. Her primary ministry was Religious Education and Pastoral Ministry. She served on the Diocesan Religious Education Staff in Reed City Michigan, and was an instructor during the summers at Victory Noll. In the missions she gained a reputation as an excellent teacher on all levels children through adult. She was best known, however, for her hunger and thirst for justice for the poor people with whom she lived and worked each day. Dorothy expressed that her greatest joy was being with people in their joys, sorrows and sufferings. She lived with them, walked with them and tried to be a healing presence in the deaths and resurrections of their lives. This Ministry of Presence was most important to her all through her Missionary life. In 1979 Sister Dorothy was missioned to Columbia, Kentucky. This made her very happy because she had always dreamed of working in Appalachia, and the people in Columbia, Kentucky have their roots in Appalachian culture. Dorothy ministered in Columbia for 12 years at Good Shepherd Church. During her years in Ministry at Good Shepherd, she offered courses in Catechetical Ministry, and a variety of educational workshops. Her goal was to bring about personal growth and increased commitment to the Gospel in a number of Christian communities in the area. She also had a heart for ecumenism and was instrumental in organizing a successful interfaith workshop in the county. During her years in Kentucky, Dorothy's ministry took a new turn. While her person-to-person ministry of

presence continued, she became more and more involved in trying to change the structures and root causes of injustice through her social action and community organizing work. In 1993, Sr. Dorothy organized the Adair County Social Action Committee. Its purpose was to encourage those caught in poverty and welfare to realize their self worth and strive for a better way of life. The ministry was to help people help themselves. The following year she was instrumental in convincing the school board to approve Project Happiness, whose purpose was to help adolescent parents participate in needed education and social skills. Pregnant teens and teen parents could return to school, and acquire the social and parenting skills needed to accept and cope with their lives. They also acquired the assertiveness and marketing skills needed to enter the labor force or continue their education after graduation. There were many other social action projects that Sr. Dorothy spear headed. She was honored and given an award by the Environmental Quality Commission of Adair County for her efforts on organizing and leading a clean-up effort in the Parrott Avenue Neighborhood. In this neighborhood there were no street lights, many vacant homes and lots that were piled with trash and overgrown weeds. When it rained, homes stood in water. The living conditions were a health hazard for children and seniors. Through Dorothy's efforts a committee of residents was formed and the major clean-up was under way. Another effort to improve conditions of poor people that Dorothy organized was bringing a group of students from Michigan during spring break to help seniors with a variety of projects such as repairing roofs of homes, painting houses, etc. Dorothy also worked with the Child Abuse Prevention Organization, and helped put on a Blue Ribbon Day to celebrate children. This was the kick off activity in the county for Child Abuse Prevention month. Dorothy also volunteered for several years at Lake Cumberland Clinical Services. In appreciation for her work at the clinic, Dorothy was presented with a certificate of appreciation by the Adair County Judge and the director of the clinic. Through her numerous leadership efforts on the grass-root level Dorothy was instrumental in bringing about a more positive change in the attitude towards Catholics in Adair County. It would take a book to acknowledge all the social action projects she accomplished for God's people during her Mission life.

In 1992 Dorothy returned to Louisville to be closer to her sister Bitzy. She continued her social action work as a volunteer. In 2007 she moved in with Bitzy as her caregiver. Dorothy felt a great indebtedness to Bitzy who was willing to stay with her parents and care for them until they died. This made it possible for Dorothy to fulfill her dream of becoming a Missionary Sister. When she and her sister were no longer able to continue living at home, they went to the Ursuline Retirement Home where she lived until coming to Victory Noll in August 2010.

The Vigil Service took place on Monday November 29, 2010 at 7:00 P.M. Dorothy chose Wisdom 3: 1-6 and verse 9 for the Scripture reading. In this reading, God promises her eternal peace. She trusted God throughout her life, now as one of the elect she will abide with God in His love forever. Sister Lucille read the Eulogy of Dorothy's life and mission. She concluded by saying that Dorothy was faithful to the mission of Jesus, as our Founder encouraged us to do by his words "we are to do what our Lord did when He was here on earth – to care for their bodies as well as their souls." She also remained faithful to our Corporate Vision of fostering justice and a sensitivity to world - wide injustices of those suffering from poverty and oppression. At the reception following the Vigil, we had an informal sharing of memories. Sr. Dorothy's friend Ann Johnson from Michigan shared that Dorothy was one of the most important persons in her life for over 40 years. She was 27 years old and a mother of three small children when Dorothy entered her life and accepted and embraced her unconditionally. She said, "unconditional love is what comes to mind when I think of Dorothy, she loved me this way." She said that Dorothy was a woman that God put in her life to encourage her to grow, to be more, and to believe in herself. She said that Dorothy was a gutsy woman who would take risks and speak up for and

take action for the vulnerable and those unable to speak up for themselves. Helen Gallagher sent an e-mail sharing about her and Melanie's visit to Kentucky where she met the energetic Dorothy. She said Dorothy knew Kentucky very well and treated them to visit some wonderful places in the local "Holy Land." The trip was completed with a delicious dinner in a pub in Bardstown. Sr. Marilyn shared that Dorothy invited her to come to Kentucky and work in Good Shepherd Parish. It was here that she came to know Dorothy as a fighter for the poor. She said Dorothy would do all in her power to accomplish what she believed in for people who were suffering because of injustice. Everyone in town knew Dorothy. She was a friend and inspiration to many. Sr. Rose Frances said she remembers Dorothy at our Chapters. She said Dorothy was insightful, challenging, and one who could "stir things up." Sister Alma shares this story. When she arrived at Dorothy's doorstep as Area Coordinator in the 1980's, she stepped into the midst of Kentucky Derby fever. She would soon find out the importance of this event. Alma was introduced to members of the Ministerial Association who were gathering together to celebrate Kentucky Derby day. In a small mission church they enjoyed a meal together. After lunch they gather around the television. There were Glenmary priests, brothers and sisters present. The names of all the horses in the race were posted on a large chart, with their chances of winning. Each one chose a horse and bet their 10 cents, and the race was on. Dorothy had enthusiastically imbibed this culture of the area, and was so happy to share this event with Alma. Alma states, "it was my initiation into another unique manifestation of the Victory Noll charism."

On Tuesday, November 30, 2010 we celebrated the Mass of Christian Burial. After the sprinkling with Holy Water Sister Marilyn and Ann Johnson placed the Pall on the casket and Ann placed the crucifix. Sister Betty proclaimed the Scripture reading from Acts 10: 34-36, 42-43. Sister Sharon Rose and Sister Rose Zita brought up the gifts at the Offertory. During the Homily, Father Fahey said that the Mass we offer for Sister Dorothy is the greatest prayer we can offer. Jesus, Emmanuel is with us here at Mass. The Mass is a pledge of our own Resurrection. Here we are supplied with the Bread of Immortality. Sister Dorothy ate of this Bread many times in her life. She was a believer who worked and witnessed for the Lord. The God whom she loved will never forget her.

After Mass on a cold wintry day, we processed to the cemetery. Here we laid Sister Dorothy to rest with final prayers, the blessing of the casket, and the singing of the hymn, "Tu Eres La Victoria." A delicious dinner to celebrate Dorothy's life followed.

Thank you Dorothy for you have fought the good fight, you have won the race. Now you are in God's embrace forever. Remember us, we will always remember you.

Sincerely in Christ,

*Sister Betty Anderson, O.L.V.M.*

Sister Elizabeth Anderson, OLVM

General Secretary