

The Beauty of Simplicity - Sister Mary Esther

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March 28, 2002

Dear Sisters, Associates, Family Members and Friends,

The morning of Thursday, March 14, 2002, Sister Mary Esther Rosenbeck whispered to Sister Gertrude Sullivan at her bedside, "I want to go." Sister asked, "Where?" And, Sister Mary Esther replied, "To heaven." Almost four hours later at 2:35 p.m., Sister's desire was realized and she began her journey to heaven.

Journeying was a happy event for Sister Mary Esther. Her 50th Jubilee Celebration included a trip to grounds tread by Blessed Kateri Tekakwitha whom she cherished. The trip included visits to Auriesville, New York, Kateri's birthplace, Chaughnawaga, Canada (near Montreal) where Kateri died and is buried.

Like Kateri, the Lily of the Mohawks, Sister Mary Esther found the beauty of God in nature. She loved the sun. On overcast days, she would say "Come out sun," and often the sun would respond. She is described as being a "Human Suncatcher." Her family speaks of the many picnics they had together on the grassy, sunny grounds of Victory Noll. On visits home Sister enjoyed the outdoors watching the process of the family dairy farming.

Sisters speak of her commitment to daily prayer and her expressed disappointment when her regular prayer partner was unable to come each day. Then there were the Holy Hours attended at the Villa when the Villa was used as a House of Prayer years ago.

Sister Mary Esther was born November 8, 1912 in Coldwater, Ohio to Joseph and Catherine Rosenbeck. She entered Victory Noll on September 1, 1933, made First Vows on September 8, 1936 and Final Profession on August 5, 1942. She ministered in Detroit, Ft. Wayne and Las Vegas, New Mexico before coming to Victory Noll in 1965 for prayer ministry and assisting the sick. Later she retired here.

Family members present for the Vigil Service on March 15th were her niece Kathy Streacker and husband Paul from Coldwater, Ohio and her cousin Henry Rauh and wife Alice from Ft. Recovery, Ohio. Present for the Mass of Christian burial on March 16th were her niece Mary Hurley and husband Paul from Lima, Ohio, her nephew Joseph Rosenbeck and wife Bertha from New Bremen, Ohio, her sister-in-law Roma Rosenbeck from Coldwater, Ohio, and her cousin Alma Bergman from Yorkshire, Ohio. Family members along with the Victory Noll Sisters participated in the liturgy. Sister is preceded in death by three brothers, David Rosenbeck, Louis Rosenbeck, George Rosenbeck, one sister Marian Rosenbeck and three siblings who died in infancy.

Some of Sister's paintings hung in her room on her last day of this life. Art was important to her. She loved to paint religious themes and nature scenes. She was quite an actress, too—even played Queen Esther during a summer drama class at Victory Noll conducted by Professor Raymond Frontain.

Sister Mary Esther was known "to see things without a lot of complication—to see only the essentials." This was evidenced by a visit to the emergency room of the hospital when she told the doctor, "I'm an old woman. I need my own bed. I want to go home."

While Sister liked to journey, she still wanted to go home. So, on March 14th when she said, "I want to go." "Where?" "To heaven" -- she happily went on her final journey to her eternal home with God.

In God's peace, joy, love,

Sister Dolores Tringl

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General Secretary

Our Lady of Victory Missionary Sisters