

JOSEFA VINS  
February 17, 1990

Victory Noll  
Huntington, Indiana  
February 20, 1990



Dear Sisters and Associates,

"See how the Cross of the Lord stands revealed as the tree of life!"  
Antiphon for Psalm 1

The crowning of Sister Josefa Vins' faithful discipleship came last Saturday morning, February 17, 1990 at 7:20 a.m. in Holy Family Health Care Center as she went home to God very peacefully. Sister's patient suffering exemplified her love for Jesus!

Sister Josefa returned to Victory Noll from San Antonio in the summer of 1967, because of health problems resulting from major surgeries and a mild diabetic problem. She lived in Holy Family Health Care Center but worked in the Publicity Department in St. Joseph's building doing clerical work and using our old Address-O-Graph system for the mailing of the newsletter. Sister worked in Publicity for seven years. She also loved her music and joined the Huntington Choral Society for several years to sing in their public presentation of the Messiah. Besides her musical ability, Sister loved to tat, crochet, knit and make artistic cards.

It was within the last three years that Sister became more disabled and unable to communicate because of cerebral arteriosclerosis. At times, she would sing familiar songs if someone would sing with her.

On Sunday, February 11th, Sister Josefa became comatose and was anointed by Father Leopold. On Saturday, February 17th, at 6:00 a.m. Sisters Madelon, Mary Dorothy, Mary Esther, Mary Loretta, Mary Genevieve, Magdalene, Clarice, Camilla and Marguerite Mills gathered at her bedside to pray the rosary and the prayers for the dying. Sister Josefa died peacefully at 7:20 a.m. Again, we witness the mystery of quiet and patient suffering and lovingly commend Sister Josefa into God's tender care!

Sister Josefa spent twenty-eight years of her religious life in Religious Education and Social Work in the missions of California, Texas, New Mexico, Utah, Indiana, Missouri and Oklahoma. She also spent two summer in New Jersey teaching summer schools in South Bound Brook and Hightstown. Sister was experienced in the deaf language and taught the deaf in Santa Fe and Ogden. She did Confraternity Work in Albuquerque, Anton Chico, La Loma, Dawson and Raton, New Mexico.

Sister Josefa was the daughter of the late Joseph and Marie nee Tesar Vins and was born February 9, 1904 in Chicago, Illinois. She was one of nine children, four of whom died as infants, a few months old. Sister entered the Congregation from Blessed Sacrament Parish in Chicago August 28, 1936 and made first profession of vows August 5, 1939 at Victory Noll. Her classmates celebrated their Golden Jubilee in August of 1986, however, Sister Josefa was unable to do so.

Sister Josefa's two sisters, Mae Harazim and Rose Fortelka and her brother Charles preceded her in death. She is survived by her brother John, who was too ill to attend the funeral and many nieces and nephews. Her niece, Rose Marie with her husband Walter Fischer and two of their children arrived on Monday for the funeral. They thought the funeral was to be on Monday. Since it was planned for Tuesday, David Fischer with his young son Luke went back to their home in Fisher, Indiana and Mary Fischer returned to her home in Ann Arbor, Michigan where she is a nurse. Walter and Rose Marie were here to meet the body and pray the Office of the Dead with us.

Our wake was held on Monday evening in the Memorial Chapel at 7:00 p.m. Sister Frances Kowalewski led the service. The theme was the Cross. Psalm 27 was used and the word "Lord" was changed to "Cross". Ex. The Cross is my light and my salvation. Sister Rose Elizabeth did the reading from Isaiah 53:2-5 and Sister Kathleen Leven read the Gospel of John 3:13-17. After the service was over, Walter Fischer gave a short talk of Rose Marie's and his remembrances of their dear Aunt Josefa whom they lovingly called Sister "Jo". He spoke with affection of the many things she had done for them through the years. Walter and Rose Marie had 15 children and Sister Josefa remembered all of them on their special days. Sister Josefa was Rose Marie's god-mother. Walter ended his remembrance with St. Ignatius' prayer, changing the words in the last line:

O my God, I want to love you  
Not that I might gain eternal heaven  
Nor escape eternal hell.  
But, Lord to love you  
Just because you are my God.  
Grant me to give to you  
And not to count the cost,  
To fight for you and not to mind the wounds  
To labor and to ask for no reward  
Except the knowledge that (I serve my Lord) she served the Lord!

Walter prayed the prayer in honor of Sister Josefa.

The Liturgy of Christian Burial was celebrated by Father Frank Kronewitter from St. Mary's parish in Huntington. Sisters Gertrude, Callista and Brabara McCord carried the Cross and Candles, Camilla and Mary Ellen placed the pall on the casket, Carmen sang the Responsorial Psalm and the Alleluia Verse, Mary Rose and Walter did the first and second readings, Father Frank gave a very brief homily, Sister Victoria offered the intercessory prayers, Rose Marie and Walter brought up the gifts, Martha gave a short eulogy and Sister Virginia Schmitt prayed the prayers of commendation at the end of the Liturgy.

Father Frank began his short talk with thoughts of John 14:1-6. He used the example of how long it takes one to get to know another person. After their three years of being with Jesus, the apostles still didn't know Jesus. They still asked, "How can we know the way?" Then they heard, "I am the Way, the Truth and the Life; no one comes to the Father but through me." Father then went on to say how important it was to "know" Jesus, not just about Him, but "know" Him.

Sister Martha referred to Walter's talk at the wake the previous evening and how lovingly he spoke of the relationship between Sister Josefa and their family and how much they treasured the gift of her presence. Sister then suggested that while Sister Rita Musante played some of Sister Josefa's favorite hymns, we too, should be grateful for her talents which she brought to this congregation and then consider ways in which we share with one another. Sr. Rita played, "Mary's Child Forever," and the Spanish "Himno a Jesús Sacramentado."

After Sister Virginia prayed the prayers of commendation, we walked to the cemetery for the graveside prayers. Sister Josefa is laid to rest next to Sisters Charlotte and Muriel on the other side of the road.

Romano Guardini says, "Ever since Christ walked the way of the Cross, it stands firmly planted on every Christian's road, for every follower of Christ has his own personal cross." The Psalmist tells us that the Cross stands revealed as the tree of life! We have Jesus' own words that whoever surrenders his life in this world preserves it to everlasting life! We rejoice with you, Sister Josefa in your new life with Christ Jesus and ask your intercession for the needs of this Congregation. Again, we praise and thank God for the reflection of his love shown to us through Sister Josefa's patient suffering! Alleluia! Alleluia! Alleluia!

Sincerely, *S. F. Bernaine Staller*