

DOROTHY LEAHY
Victor January 09, 1989
Huntington, Indiana
January 11, 1989

Dear Sisters and Associates,

"PRECIOUS IN THE EYES OF THE LORD IS THE DEATH OF HIS FAITHFUL ONES!"
Ps. 116:15

Having experienced the mystery of death for the second time in thirty-three days, we gathered together this morning in faith and in love to lay the body of our dear Sister Dorothy Leahy to rest and to praise and thank God for the reflection of his love in Sister, whose faithfulness to her commitment was the beautiful expression of her love for God and for her Congregation.

The summons to "come" came quickly! Sister Dorothy had enjoyed her breakfast and dinner and after her dinner the nurses had made her comfortable and turned her on her side for her nap. This was around 12:30 p.m. When the nurse checked in on her at 1:05 p.m., she had gone home to God. She had died very peacefully in her sleep, January 9, 1989, on the feast of the Baptism of Our Lord. The time of death was set at 1:05 p.m.

Sister Dorothy was in Cheyenne, Wyoming when she suffered a serious heart attack October 19, 1980. She was in the intensive care unit in the hospital until October 27th. After leaving the hospital, she lived at the 18th street Convent in Cheyenne. On March 15, 1982, she returned to the Noll and was in residence in the O.L.V. building east wing. She was able to take the stairs until May 25th, 1983 when she had to move to the Holy Family building and live on the second floor. She continued to suffer from congestive heart failure and on April 18, 1986, she was moved to the third floor nursing unit. Since that time, she has continued to grow weaker and more frail. In these past three months before her death, she was a bed patient, who needed occasional oxygen, but who continued to be in good spirits. She never lost her sense of humor!

Sister Dorothy was the daughter of the late James and Margaret nee White Leahy and was born December 24, 1900 in Kansas City, Kansas. She was one of eight children. After graduation from high school, she worked as a billing clerk in an office before entering the congregation. She entered the Congregation from St. Paul's parish in Davenport, Iowa August 9, 1926 and made first profession of vows at Victory Noll August 15, 1928. Sister spent 54 years of her religious life in religious education and administrative positions in Indiana, California, New Mexico and Wyoming. Thirty-seven of those years were spent in the missions of California.

Sister Dorothy is survived by her two sisters, Elsie Leahy and Margaret McDermott of Davenport, Iowa. Margaret is caring for her oldest sister, Elsie and neither were able to be present for the funeral.

Our wake service, The Night Prayer of the Church, was held Tuesday evening at 7:00 p.m. with Father Leopold, OFM, Cap., officiating. Sister Martha Wordeman did the reading. The service was closed with the gregorian chant, Alma Redemptoris.

The Liturgy of Christian Burial was celebrated by Father Leopold. Sisters Mary Cecilia, Kathleen Cummings and Dorothy Louise Wortmann were cross and candle bearers; Sisters Veronica Hirjak and Barbara McCord did the readings; Sister Germaine sang the Responsorial Psalm and the Alleluia Verse; Sister Genevieve Dziedzic offered the petitions, Sisters Carolyn Louise Neff and Mary Cecilia Niehaus brought up the gifts. Sisters Mary Dorothy Schneider and Mary Eleanor Clements placed the pall on the casket. Father Leopold spoke of the beautiful line in Psalm 116 which tells us how precious

in the eyes of the Lord is the death of His faithful ones. He applied these lines to Sister Dorothy and spoke of her faithfulness. In these last months when she couldn't communicate very well and sometimes not at all, the Lord was certainly at her side. We too, he said, have come to know Jesus of Nazareth. Each time we witness death, we are reminded of our own passing into eternity and pray for ourselves, born of water and the Spirit in Baptism, to be faithful to our calling.

Sister Mary Louise prayed the prayers of commendation at the end of the Mass. Before she began the prayers, she summed up her thoughts in these words:

"Yesterday, as I looked at the record that is a part of our community file on Sister Dorothy Leahy, I was struck by the simplicity of what I found; the brief factual record of a woman who lived all but the few remaining years of this century.

It begins:

Born: December 24, 1900, Kansas City, Kansas
Baptized: December 29, 1900 Blessed Sacrament Church, Kansas City, Kansas
Entered Religious Life: August 9, 1926
Died: January 9, 1989 at 1:05 p.m. on the feast of The Baptism of Our Lord.

"Yes, there is a list of the missions in Indiana, California, New Mexico and Wyoming in which Sister ministered and a note of the years and houses in which she served as local superior, but even with this, the record of Sister Dorothy's life is summarized on little more than two pages..... I sat and thought about this for a long time. Then a phrase in a book that was open on my desk caught my eye. It read - HUMBLE ENOUGH FOR NEW LIFE."

"None of us were with Sister Dorothy when she actually died, and it seems that before we realized it, in a quite matter-of-fact way, she was born into New Life. . . without a break, she simply began to live a New Life and in this way she bore witness to the reality that Jesus never really experiences us as dead."

"The phrase, HUMBLE ENOUGH FOR NEW LIFE, somehow seems very appropriate for Sister Dorothy. She always struck me as a very matter-of-fact woman of few words, but a very human woman with a droll sense of humor and a glint of mischief and determination in her clear, blue eyes."

"Her somewhat quick temper was balanced by an equally quick effort and ability to forgive and forget without carrying grudges, and those who knew Sister best have recalled how sensitive she was to the feelings and needs of others; how ready she was to serve."

"Sister Dorothy was a simple, straight forward woman, and religious, a woman who lived her life with a quiet dignity and in a way that simply made her HUMBLE ENOUGH FOR NEW LIFE as she lived in and with Jesus Christ."

"Sisters, as we reflect on Sister Dorothy's legacy to us, let us learn from her spirit of service, her quiet humor, that often indicated that she was very much in touch with reality and willing to assume her rightful place in reality. Sister Dorothy, through her life, became HUMBLE ENOUGH FOR NEW LIFE, and this is what WE strive for and what, with her, we celebrate today!"

As we stood around the grave in the cemetery, Father Leopold prayed the final prayers. A Titmouse sang so beautifully. It thrilled me! It reminded me of NEW LIFE, NEW BEGINNINGS, Sister Dorothy's new life in Christ Jesus. Indeed, how precious in the eyes of the Lord, is the death of his faithful ones! What a call to continue our own faithfulness in joy!

Sincerely in Jesus and Mary,
Sister Germaine Stadler, O.L.V.M.
Sister Germaine Stadler, o.l.v.m.