



March 5, 1997

Dear Sisters:

We sang "In Paradisum" today as Sister Mary Rita Windolph had requested for her funeral. "May choirs of angels escort you into paradise" rang out after the Mass of the Resurrection.

Sister Mary Rita had not been feeling well for a few months but was up even on Saturday. She had a massive stroke Sunday morning, March 2 very early. The doctors at the hospital put her in intensive care immediately. Sisters remained by her side all day and night though little response could be seen. Sister Rose Elizabeth Hohner was with Sister when she departed 3:10 Monday morning "to be escorted to paradise."

We met in Memorial Chapel Tuesday afternoon to pray the rosary. That evening at the beautiful wake service Sisters shared some of their friendship with and admiration for Sister Mary Rita. Her brother, Father Joseph Windolph, was present with us to remember his family and sister. The intelligence of Sister was recognized by many. Her presence was cherished by Mrs. Renk, Sister Cecilia Marie's mother while she was at Victory Noll. The pretty afghans and quilts made by Sister were a blessing as Sisters brought them to the poor in the missions. Not forgotten are the recycled greeting cards and wallpaper she created into books. Individually styled for the recipient these books were unique and treasured. Her humor was hidden in the few words accompanying the picture. As well one sensed her appreciation and recognition for "the little things" contributed to the community life by the person receiving the book.

Father Joseph Windolph presided at the Mass of Resurrection and gave the homily. His beautiful description of meeting Jesus was hopeful and loving.

Father Joseph was the only member of the family able to attend the funeral. Some were on the way and had car problems. Fathers Thomas Sess and Elric Samson of the same house as Father Joseph were here for the Mass on Wednesday.

Sister Mary Rita Windolph was born June 13, 1913 in Albion, Nebraska to Oscar and Agnes (Buckhard) Windolph. She entered Our Lady of Victory Missionary Sisters community August 28, 1934. She made first vows August 15, 1937 and has served in missions of Indiana, California, Texas, Colorado and Missouri in religious education and pastoral ministries. Since returning to Victory Noll in 1972 Sister has ministered in health care in Holy Family Health Care Center as nurse aid and participated in many other tasks.

Survivors of the family include: two sisters, Sister Lucy of Milwaukee, Wisconsin; Therese Windolph of West Allis, Wisconsin; and five brothers, Rev. Joseph of Chicago, Illinois; Rev. George of Quincy, Illinois; Rev. Michael of Oak Forest, Illinois; Rev. Nestor of Brazil, South America and Philip of Burbank, Illinois.

Four sisters have preceded Sister Mary Rita in death: Sister Catherine, Sister Agnes, Sister Bernard and Gladys Windolph.

May the martyrs receive and welcome you, Sister Mary Rita. May they bring you home into the holy city Jerusalem. May the holy angels welcome you and with Lazarus who lived in poverty, may you have everlasting rest.

Sincerely in Our Lady of Victory

Sr. Margie Curran
General Secretary