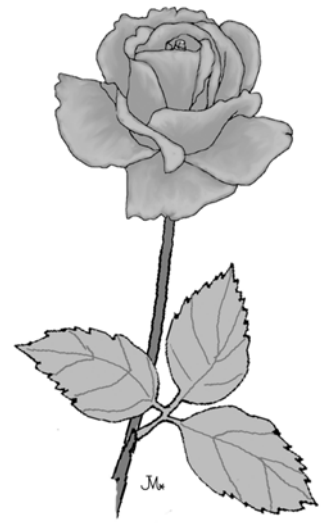


October 3, 2010

Dear Sisters, Associates, Family and Friends.

Sister Mary Bernarda Marquez died peacefully at 7:15 P.M. on Thursday September 23, 2010 at Holy Family Health Care Center, Victory Noll. Sister Mary Bernarda was present at supper, and later called for help from her room. She was leaning over her walker when the nurse arrived. She lifted Mary Bernarda down to the floor. Sister took a breath and expired. Mary Bernarda had an apparent heart attack. She had been declining, but whenever she felt up to it she would be at her place for meals, happy to share some time in conversation with the sisters. Different sisters would offer to wheel her back to her room after a meal, and Mary Bernarda would always express her gratitude for the help. Sister Mary Bernarda had a very bad leg condition but never complained. She knew God would be calling her home soon, and she was ready and lived content in God's presence.

Sister Mary Bernarda was born August 30, 1912 in Duran, New Mexico to Castulo and Imelda Sanchez Marquez. She had nine siblings, one older sister Candida Marquez, and two older brothers, Arthur and Arnold Marquez, and three younger brothers Benjamin, Joe, and Mark Marquez and three younger sisters Rose Lang Tafoya, Emerald Borden, and Sister Imelda Therese Marquez. Sister Mary Bernarda was preceded in death by two sisters Candida Marquez, and Rose Lang Tafoya and four brothers Arthur, Arnold, Benjamin and Joe Marquez. Surviving are one brother Mark Marquez and two sisters Emerald Borden, and Sister Imelda Therese Marquez.



Sister Mary Bernarda entered the Congregation of Our Lady of Victory Missionary Sisters on February 7, 1933. She made first Profession of Vows on March 25, 1936, and her Perpetual Vows on August 5, 1940 at Victory Noll. Mary Bernarda served in the Missions in Indiana, California, Texas, Wyoming, Nevada, Arizona, and Panama City, Panama. Sister Mary Bernarda's ministry in the United States was primarily Religious Education on all levels, children, young adults and especially pre-sacramental classes with parents. Sister also did Pastoral Ministry, home visiting and visiting the sick.

Sister Mary Bernarda wrote memoirs of her life. Her stories ranged from her childhood until she entered Victory Noll. One memory that was very touching was her close relationship with her father. She tells how he would read to her and her siblings on winter nights from a big, thick book entitled "A Thousand and One Nights" in Spanish. Two stories she remembers were Aladdin and His Marvelous Lamp, and Ali Baba and the Forty Thieves. Mary Bernarda shared how her dad would teach them their prayers. Just before it was time to go to bed, she and her sisters and brothers would kneel around his chair and pray all the traditional prayers that he had taught them. He would also prepare them for their First Holy Communion, and when he felt they were ready he would take them to the parish priest to be examined. Mary Bernarda tells an interesting story from her childhood. During the summer she and her family were traveling to Anton Chico to visit her maternal grandparents. It took a day and a half to make

the journey in a covered wagon. She said that the scenery was gorgeous. Suddenly the wheel of the wagon broke and her dad said they would have to walk the rest of the way. It was dark and they were guided by moonlight. They each took what they could carry from the wagon and started walking. She remembers as they walked her dad started singing the Ave Maria, a well-known and popular Spanish hymn. They all joined in. Every time Mary Bernarda saw the film "The Sound of Music," she was reminded of walking through the mountain trail with her family singing. Another memory Mary Bernarda shared was that of her Mother who always had a vegetable garden and flower garden. A large space of the ground was reserved for a chili plot. Her mother loved plants and had them all over the house inside and out. They had a cow and chickens for milk and eggs. Sister Mary Bernarda loved to feed the chickens. She would rattle the coffee can that had corn in it and the chickens would come running to her. Mary Bernarda said that her mother was a great cook and baker and with the produce from their vegetable garden and farm animals, they were never in want for delicious meals and desserts.

During her last year of high school Mary Bernarda felt the call to dedicate her life to serving God and others. She had learned about the Missionary Catechists and felt God was calling her to this Community. In 1933 she entered the Victory Noll Training Institute in Huntington, Indiana and began her new life. Sister Mary Bernarda shares two high points of her life journey as a Missionary Sister. First was when she was assigned to help Archbishop Francis Beckman, CM with the training of a native Panamanian Community of Sisters, which he was establishing. In 1948, Sister Mary Bernarda Marquez and Sister Monica Ulibarri went to Panama to train these young women in all aspects of religious and missionary life. Mary Bernarda was appointed Novice Mistress. She states that this was "a great challenge and a great enrichment experience". She was with this Community for three-and-a-half years and since had visited them several times. On learning of Sister Mary Bernarda's death, Sister Leyda, Superior of the Missionary Catechists of the Miraculous Medal from Panama wrote to us. She said that they unite with us in prayer at the departure of Sister Mary Bernarda to the house of God. She states, "Sister Bernarda participated actively in the initial foundation of our religious community." Sister Leyda shared that Sister Bernarda at every moment was a woman open to the will of God, in service to the Church and to our Congregation. Sister Leyda said, "Thank you, Sister Bernarda for your example of service, fidelity, joy and simplicity demonstrated at every moment. God bless you."

The second highlight for Mary Bernarda was going on a pilgrimage to Europe for the canonization of St. Anthony Marie Claret, Spanish founder of the Order of Claretian Fathers. The canonization took place at St. Peter's in Rome on May 7, 1950 by Pope Pius XII. She was in Europe for six weeks, touring several countries and visiting famous places. She felt the tour was a great education.

Sister Mary Bernarda retired to Victory Noll in 2000. She continued to actively offer her gifts and talents to the Community by being a Spanish translator and proofreader. She translated many materials such as Visions, for publication from English into Spanish, and continued this ministry until recently.

At the Vigil Service on Tuesday evening Sister Mary Bernarda's nephew Bill Marquez and her cousin Vivian Sanchez were present. Mary Bernarda had requested that there be no sharing of memories. In place of this we prayed three decades of the Rosary. The first Joyful Mystery the "Annunciation," Mary's call from God. During this decade we reflected on Mary Bernarda's own vocation and call from God. The

third Luminous Mystery, the "Proclamation of the Reign of God." We reflected on Mary Bernarda's ministries throughout her life, and her own witnessing to others of the good news of Jesus. The fifth Sorrowful Mystery, "Jesus Dies on the Cross" and the first Glorious Mystery, "The Resurrection," we reflected on the Paschal Mystery in Mary Bernarda's life, her sufferings and now her Victory. After the service we continued informal sharing in the dining room with some refreshments.

On Wednesday September 29, 2010, we celebrated the Mass of Christian Burial. Sister Mary Bernarda's grandniece, Ann Bundy and her children Theresa, Michelle, Joshua, Abigail and Daniel were present. Her nephew Bill and cousin Vivian were also present for the Liturgy. Before Mass began Ann sang a beautiful and inspiring hymn to Jesus accompanied on the violin by her daughter Theresa. After the sprinkling with Holy Water, Mary Bernarda's great-grandniece Michelle, and great-grandnephew Joshua placed the Pall on the casket. Bill Marquez placed the Crucifix on the casket. The gifts were brought up by Vivien Sanchez, Mary Bernarda's cousin and Abigail Bundy her great-grandniece. For the first reading, Sister Mary Bernarda chose Isaiah 25:6-9. In his Homily, Father Fahey said that this is the most beautiful passage in the Old Testament. It is a prophesy about the Messiah, about the second coming of Jesus as our Savior. "On this mountain the Lord will swallow up the veil the shrouds all peoples," the veil of ignorance and indifference that keeps us from knowing God and seeing God. God has removed the veil from Sister Mary Bernarda and now she sees Him face to face. We too, like Mary Bernarda, will know God and see Him face to face. God will destroy death forever. This should make us shout for joy. Because of Jesus, death is only a Passover, a door. Isaiah says that the Lord God will wipe away the tears from every face and all will say this is our God for whom we waited. Let us rejoice and exult in His salvation. Sister Mary Bernarda has experienced all this. Sister has won salvation. The door to salvation is faith, and Sister believed and has passed through that door.

After Mass we processed to the cemetery, where we laid Sister Mary Bernarda to rest with the final prayers, blessing of the casket, and the singing of the hymn to Our Lady of Victory, "We have a Holy Mother." A delicious dinner to celebrate Sister Mary Bernarda's life followed in the dining room.

For her memorial card Sister Mary Bernarda chose these words from the Book of Revelation, "Remain faithful until death and I will give you the crown of Life." We rejoice with you, Mary Bernarda, that you have received the crown of Life. We ask for your prayers as we continue our journey towards eternal life with God.

Sincerely in Christ,

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

Sister Elizabeth Anderson, OLVM

General Secretary