



Victory Noll
Huntington, IN
January 28, 1991

Dear Sisters and Associates,

"The God of all grace who called you to eternal glory in Christ...will confirm, strengthen and support you."

(1 Peter 5:10)

Sister Bernadette Doiron, OLVN, died peacefully in the Lord last Friday evening, January 25th at 7:05 p.m. on the feast of St. Paul the Apostle.

This morning, we came together in faith, hope and love to celebrate a meaningful Liturgy and bring her remains to rest, thanking God for the reflection of his love in her spirit of self-giving.

Sister Bernadette's death brings the number of deceased sisters to 100.

Sister Bernadette had a history of falls and broken bones but she always seemed to heal well and get on with life. Her fall in Canada in 1969 gave her a fractured left ankle which needed bone grafts. The bone grafts left her leg shorter and her ankle stiff, but she was able to walk well with no pain. I always thought it amazing that a fractured hip in 1986 and a fractured pelvis in 1988 didn't daunt her as she recovered from both and went back to her favorite work of upholstering the community's furniture and mending statues.

This past summer, her heart condition and the ulcers on her legs became more serious and Sister was moved to third floor for more help. She continued to go to St. Joseph's Workshop, but had to take longer rest periods. In December, she was forced to give up her work. She was very alert and well aware of her condition. She received the Sacrament of the Sick frequently and found much comfort in prayer. She appreciated the presence of the sisters who visited her or took turns staying with her. The last three weeks, Sister Bernadette suffered a lot of pain and had great difficulty breathing. The difficulty in breathing made her sit up day and night. Last Friday, she seemed very restless and in the early evening became quiet. She slipped into eternity very quietly and gently at 7:05 p.m. The nurses called the sisters to her bedside. Sisters Lucy Marie, Madelon LoRang and Christopher began the prayers for the dying and were joined by others who came as soon as they heard the call.

Sister Bernadette spent 33 years of her religious life in the missions of New Mexico, California, Arizona, Texas, Indiana, Ohio, Vermont, Colorado, Pennsylvania and Michigan. She returned to Victory Noll from Detroit in 1971 because of her fractured ankle. She loved the missions and tried twice to go back to her work. She spent a year as a companion with Sister Dorothy McMannon in Lakeview, MI. and a few months in St. Petersburg, Florida. The rest of these past twenty years were full ones for Sr. Bernadette as she worked on the outdoor stations and painted the outdoor statues. In 1977, she redid the stations in OLV chapel. For the past 14 or 15 years she has

worked in upholstering furniture for the community. She has produced some really fine pieces of furniture to grace our rooms. She had a natural aptitude for this skill and her work throughout Victory Noll attests to this.

Sister Bernadette, the daughter of Francois and Helene nee Babineau Doiron was born June 17, 1905 in Great Works, Maine, the fourth oldest in a family of nine children. She entered the Congregation from St. Michelle's parish in Beacon Falls, Connecticut 2/4/31 and made first profession of vows 2/11/34 at Victory Noll.

Sister's family, Exilda, Catherine, Clement, Raymond and Francis were unable to come because of age and illness. Francis has been in touch with Sister Lucy Marie all along so the family has been informed of Sister's illness and death. Sister Rose Zita made a video of the Liturgy this morning so they will be able to share their sister's funeral.

The wake was held at 7:00 p.m. on Sunday evening with Sister Gertrude leading the prayers. Sister Florentine placed the crucifix on the casket. Sister Geraldine Kirkessner spoke briefly of Sister Bernadette's French Canadian descent and her love for her heritage. Just two days before she died, she was restless and Sister Geraldine asked her if she would like to say the Hail Mary in French. Bernadette was pleased and they spoke in French. Sister ended her reflection by saying that no matter what our roots, what language we use to speak to one another or to pray, let us always be rooted in love.

Father Frank Kronewitter celebrated the Liturgy with us. Sisters Frances K. carried the cross, Monica G. and Rose Elizabeth H. carried the candles; Christopher and Lucy Marie placed the pall on the casket; Florentine and Grace G. did the readings; Germaine sang the Responsorial and Alleluia verse; Martha offered the intercessions and Marie Jane and Helen Marie brought up the gifts. Mary Hubley sang the Communion meditation. Father gave the homily and said the commendation prayers. In his homily, Father used the readings of the day: Isaiah 25:6. 7-9, 1 John 3:1-2 and the Gospel of John 14:1-6 to comment on God's great love and care for us.

Although the prayers at the grave-site were said in the chapel because Father thought it was too cold for us to be going out, the usual group walked to the cemetery, so we prayed again at the grave.

Sister Bernadette suffered a great deal of pain since summer. After a while, even Sister Mary Joan couldn't help her with the whirlpool because of her ulcerated legs. Sister had a large rectangular sign in her room with the words, "Yes, Heavenly Father" printed in the center and the words of the Our Father written all around the edges of the sign. When the pain became unbearable, she could be heard saying her "yes" over and over again.

I will miss you, Bernadette, and I pray that "the angels lead you into paradise. May the martyrs come to welcome you into the holy city...may the choirs of angels welcome you...and may you have eternal rest!"
Alleluia! alleluia! alleluia!

Sincerely in Jesus and Mary,

Sister Germaine *Stable*
C. P. U.