

February 27, 2012

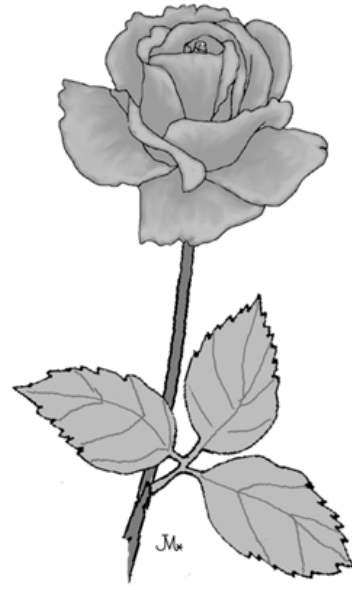
Dear Sisters, Associates, Family and Friends,

Sister Marlene Wolf went peacefully home to God at 6:00 p.m. on Wednesday, February 15, 2012 at Parkview Huntington Hospital, Huntington. Sister Martha Sijota was with Marlene when she died. Marlene was admitted to the hospital with difficulty breathing due to congestive heart failure. Sisters visited and prayed with her at the hospital and Marlene expressed her gratitude for the visits and for reading the Valentine cards that she had received.

Sister Marlene was born in Wadena, Minn. on July 21, 1921, to Martin and Elizabeth Salz Wolf. Sister was preceded in death by her parents and five brothers, Joseph, Frederick, Leonard, Albert and George Wolf. Two sisters also preceded her in death, Catherine Seckar and Anna Maria Miller.

Sister Marlene entered the Congregation of Our Lady of Victory Missionary Sisters on September 6, 1950. She made her first Profession of Vows on August 5, 1953 at Victory Noll, and her Perpetual Vows on August 5, 1959 at Victory Noll in Huntington.

Marlene served God and God's people in the missions of California, Utah, Colorado, Texas, and Illinois. She began her missionary life in Brawley, Calif. For a girl from Minnesota, this was quite a climate change. In the summer months, Brawley's temperature can sometimes reach 120 degrees with an average temperature of 105-110. However, Marlene was full of youthful zeal and entered into her ministry with joyful anticipation. She began her catechetical teaching here, and loved sharing the Good News of Jesus with youth and adults. Visiting and getting to know the people revealed their many social needs for the basic necessities of life. Marlene was happy to be able to minister with her community sisters to provide ways to meet these needs. Sister Marlene continued in the field of Religious Education. To prepare for her ministry she obtained a Bachelor's Degree from St. Joseph's College in Orange, Calif., and a Masters Degree in Religious Education from the University of St. Thomas in Houston, Tex. In a reflection she wrote for her 50th Jubilee, she states how grateful she was to have the opportunity to work among the poor, and to have "met so many wonderful people in my work who have greatly enriched my life and continue to do so through their beautiful witness of living the Gospel values of Jesus."



At the Vigil Service on Sunday evening, Sister Marlene's niece Marlene Baldwin, and her two nephews Don Wolf and Terry Wolf were present. The opening hymn chosen by Marlene for her Vigil was "Jerusalem My Destiny." The words had so much meaning for her and also for us. Words from the refrain say, "We have set our hearts for the way this journey is our destiny. Let no one walk alone, the journey makes us one." One of the verses that so speaks to us reads, "In my thirst you let me drink the waters of your life. Here among you I have met the Savior Jesus Christ." Sister Marlene requested that there be no sharing of memories or stories during the Vigil. We decided that our sharing would be

informal after the Vigil at the tables during refreshments. The family spoke at table about the time they invited Marlene to visit Italy with them. She had such a wonderful time, and was such a trooper. Her nephew Don wheeled her in a wheelchair and she did not want to miss a thing. She spoke of this wonderful experience for many years.

Sister Ginger wrote, “ My memories of Marlene, Aunt Florence, are many and stretch back my entire life within the Community.” She met Marlene at the Tremont house when inquiring about joining the Community. In her first years Marlene was always there when Ginger needed a listening ear. They walked together around Salome Lake and shared their Joys and concerns. Ginger states, “It was the foundation on which we built the lasting friendship that would carry me through my first 25 years of living as a Victory Noll Sister.” Marlene loved the mountains and the year when both she and Ginger lived in Denver, they would drive up into Tetons when they both had time to be away for an afternoon. Marlene had an opportunity to see them once again when she went to Wyoming with Ginger and her family. They drove up to Jackson to see the beautiful Tetons and the Rocky Mountains of Wyoming. Marlene always wanted to visit the Holy Land. She finally had the opportunity when Ginger took her with her when she studied there one summer. The olive wood rosary hung on her wall from that trip in 1996. Ginger states, “I will miss her compassion, her interest in all I was involved in and her constant prayerful support.”

Sister Mary Helen wrote when Marlene was missioned to serve in St Jude’s Parish, a large suburban parish in Denver, she lived in our OLVM convent on Tremont St., located in the inner city. In this area the people were very poor. There were many social problems, needs such as poor and inadequate housing, lack of food, clothing and shelter. The sisters had a youth center, named Holy Ghost Center, and a Mothers’ Group and they worked to alleviate some of these basic needs. Mary Helen states, “This drew Marlene’s loving concern. She made these needs known to the staff or St. Jude’s Parish.” They responded generously by providing a monthly check for special needs, and designated one Sunday a month for the collection of food and clothing for the Holy Ghost Center. Mary Helen said, “One Sunday a month we drove our station wagon to St. Jude’s and loaded it with the generous offerings of the people of St. Jude’s. All this was made possible through the intervention and care of Sister Marlene.”

Sister Francesca wrote to share how much support Marlene gave her in her ministry with the Hmong people. They were Southeast Asian refugees living in Denver. Thousands of Hmong were resettled in our country after the Southeast Asian war. During the war they were staunch allies of the Americans which resulted in their persecution by the Communists. Marlene was very interested in and supportive of the Hmong community. Even though she had a full time parish ministry, she would accompany Francesca on various mountain retreats with youth and young adult groups from the Hmong community. She would assist with the youth and young adult programs, and served as a chaperon and companion. Francesca also shared that Marlene — who was an excellent seamstress — was very appreciative of Hmong

needlework and folk art, and helped to market their art in Denver and even in Anchorage, Alaska, where a friend of hers agreed to sell some of the needlework. Francesca said that last year when she visited them, the Hmong community in Denver asked Francesca to send their special wishes to Marlene for they cherished her as a special friend.

On Monday, February 20, 2012, we celebrated the Mass of Christian Burial. Sister Marlene's niece Marlene and nephews Don and Terry were present. Sister Mary Jo Maes and Sister Marilyn, Marlene's classmates, placed the Pall and the Crucifix on the casket. Marlene chose as the Gospel for her Mass, John 11:21-27. In this Gospel Jesus says to Martha, "I am the resurrection and the Life, those who believe in Me even though they die, will live, and everyone who lives and believes in Me will never die." Father Fahey in his homily said that Sister Marlene believed. He said that we celebrate this Mass because Sister Marlene won the victory over death united with Jesus. Father said "she ran the race, kept the faith, and won her way into eternal life with God, with Mary and with all the Saints. That is something deserving to be celebrated."

After Mass we processed to the cemetery, where we laid Sister Marlene to rest with the final prayers, blessing of the casket, and the singing of the Hymn, "Tu Eres La Victoria." A delicious dinner to celebrate Marlene's life followed.

Marlene we rejoice with you in your victory. We ask that you remember us as we continue our journey into eternal joy, to be united with you and all our sisters.

Sincerely in Christ,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Sister Betty Anderson, O.L.V.M." The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Sister Elizabeth Anderson, OLVM

General Secretary