



SISTER GRACE GOLENBERKE, OLVM

Sister Grace died on January 13, 2014. Several of nurses and Sister Monica Haines, her classmate, were with Sister Grace when she rendered her soul into the loving embrace of God.

Sister Grace was born in Big Beaver, Michigan, on August 21, 1926, to Joseph Golenberke and Helen Kulazeski Golenberke. She was the third of four children and baptized Dorothy Marie on September 12, 1926.

She was preceded in death by her parents and all of her siblings, Harry and Richard Golenberke, and Genevieve Gurnack.

Sister Grace entered the Congregation of Our Lady of Victory Missionary Sisters on October 27, 1948, and made first vows on August 5, 1951. Her first mission was San Pedro, California, and she also served in other missions in California, along with missions in Michigan, Pennsylvania, New Mexico, Texas, Utah, and Indiana. Sister did ministry at Victory Noll several times during her years of ministry and her final returned was in 2005 to be the chapel sacristan and community volunteer.

Religious education was Sister Grace's specialty. In most, if not all, of the parishes where she ministered, she worked in the area of religious education. Even when she went home to care for her mother in the late 1980's, she worked, at least part of the time, for her home parish in religious education. In her last parish, St. Peter's Church Fort Wayne, Indiana, she served as Pastoral Associate along with being the Director of Religious Education.

She came to Victory Noll in the fall of 1996 to be assistant sacristan. In 1999, Sister Grace moved to Hagerman and then Roswell, New Mexico, to be part of a new adventure with Sister Monica Haines. The two worked being a presence to the people and Sister Grace once again worked with Religious Education.

Sister Grace returned to Victory Noll in 2001 to be a part of the Victory Noll Ministry Center's core team. One of her duties during that time was working with the "Widows of Prayer" group. She prepared special videos of spiritual figures and led the group's discussion on a variety of spiritual topics for their monthly meetings.

After one more short mission in Fort Wayne, from 2003 to 2005, she returned to Victory Noll and volunteered in a variety of areas, one being again in the sacristy. She completely retired in 2009, although she was always available to play cards and chat with the sisters during meals and other activities. It was also during this time that Sister Grace had a renewed interest and awakening to the mystical tradition of the Church. It opened up a new depth in her life and her spirituality. The mystics became very important to her once again when she had time to be with them at a different time in her life and that meant being with them in a fresh way.

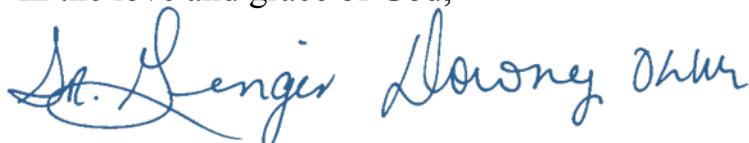
One of Sister Grace's classmates recalled how she loved to watch John Wayne movies. She also recalled that Sister Grace worked with all different groups of people — farmers and ranchers, native Americans, African Americans and Hispanics — and she enjoyed her work with each different group. They called forth another side of her and showed her a widening face of God.

Sister Grace's niece, Nancy Ottinger and her husband, Kevin, along with her three brothers, Sister Grace's nephews, Harry, Mike and Dan Golenberke, were all able to join us for both the wake, Sunday evening January 19, 2014 and then for the funeral on Monday, January 20, 2014. They brought pictures of Sister Grace taken at various times on her home visits to the family farm in Michigan. These pictures just confirmed the fact that she always enjoyed her summer visits and being with the family at the farm.

In his homily at the funeral, Fr. Dale Bauman made the connection between Sister Grace's name and the life she lived. He mentioned that "grace" is the working of the Holy Spirit and the gifting of faith, hope and charity so that one may witness to Jesus through their lives. Grace allows one to become an instrument of God and Sister Grace was that to all with whom she taught in religious education classes, as altar boys or as adults. She was God's instrument of grace to others, now may she experience the love and grace of God.

Sister Grace, may you enjoy for all eternity the green, green pastures of heaven and may you forever sing of God's wonder.

In the love and grace of God,



Sr. Ginger Downey, OLVM

