

Sister Gertrude

A Smiling Artist

August 25, 2003

Victory Noll
P. O. Box 109
Huntington, IN 46750
260-356-0628

Dear Sisters, Associates, Family Members and Friends,

Perhaps because Sister Gertrude described herself as “not a ‘noisy’ person” she slipped away quietly, quickly and peacefully on Wednesday, August 20, 2003 at 4:30 p.m. in Holy Family Health Care Center, Victory Noll.

In an interview with a staff writer of the Greeley (Colorado) Tribune, Sister Gertrude describes one of her dreams as a teenager in the following poem:

*His voice, when He spoke was so sweet,
As He gently said, “Come follow me.”
Wond’ring, I rose to my feet,
And followed the path marked for me,...*

And... this dream was the beginning of her call to Religious Life. She entered Victory Noll on February 3, 1933 at the age of nineteen and was Professed on September 8, 1936. She ministered in California, Colorado, Nevada, Texas, Utah and in Indiana at Victory Noll. She returned to Victory Noll in 1996 doing full time ministry of teaching piano, receptionist, tutoring and writing children’s books. Even though illness required her to move to Holy Family Health Care Center during the late winter of 2003, she continued giving piano lessons to 23 students. Her annual piano recital was held in May in Memorial Chapel.

Although Sister Gertrude entered Victory Noll from Topeka, Kansas, she was born in Albuquerque, New Mexico. Her parents were Oscar C. Spetter and

Sophia Poleneck Spetter. She is survived by two sisters and one brother, Sister Mary Matilda Spetter, OLVN of Victory Noll, Viola Spetter Prue of Paxico, KS, and Eugene N. Spetter of Delia, KS. She is preceded in death by seven brothers and one sister.

The Vigil Service was held on August 21st and Mass of Christian Burial on August 22nd. Sister's nephew, Cecil Spetter, his wife Anna, and their three daughters, one son, and two grandchildren from Kansas were able to come to Huntington. Victory Noll Sisters from Ft. Wayne and two Associates were also present.

Many of Sister's piano students and their parents attended the services and shared memories of Sister during the Vigil. Her acceptance of death seemed to give them meaning about the life to come. Their comments reflected Sister's art of storytelling and ability to share humor. Sister Mary Matilda Spetter spoke about her sister's knowledge and intelligence and that she was partly responsible for her own entrance into Victory Noll.

Although Sister's hope was to continue giving piano lessons until she was 95 years old, God called her to heaven at the age of 89 years. During the homily of the Mass Father Thomas Fahey described heaven as an "exciting" place, and "it must be exciting to take your first step into eternity!" This leaves us who remain in this life to just dream what "a smiling artist" is doing in an exciting place called heaven!

In God's peace, joy, love,



Sister Dolores Tringl
General Secretary
Our Lady of Victory Missionary Sisters