



SISTER MARY KARL, OLVM

Sr. Mary Karl passed away on Monday, January 28, 2013, at the Holy Family Health Care Center, Victory Noll. She was born on November 5, 1906 in Peoria, Illinois to Gustave Karl and Elizabeth Carroll Karl and baptized Mary Ruth, at St. John's Catholic Church on December 2, 1906. She is preceded in death by her parents, three brothers, Raymond, Herbert and Wilbur Karl and one sister, Sister Miriam Ruth Karl, CSJ.

Sr. Mary entered the Congregation of Our Lady of Victory Missionary Sisters on February 7, 1933 and made first vows on March 25, 1936. She served in the missions in California, Texas, and Indiana. She returned to Victory Noll in 1979 to write poetry, work on her painting and be the community contact with the Associate Catechists of Mary.

Sr. Mary spent many of her missionary years in dedicated service to hundreds of children and teachers through religious education and also with the variety of people who have been associates in different ways with our congregation: the Associate Catechists of Mary, the Associates in Prayer, and the Covenant Associates.

One of the Associate Catechists of Mary from California shared this touching story of Sr. Mary. "Sister would organize a club and teach us how to bake. Sometimes she would play the piano and have us march in a circle around the room. She also taught us beautiful hymns to Our Blessed Mother." Some others remember how Sr. Mary held the crucifix when she prayed the rosary. She always held the crucifix in the palm of her hand and did not let it dangle. She wanted to treasure it and add feeling to her prayers. Sr. Mary shared her love and dedication to Mary and her zeal for her missionary ministry throughout her long life. Another way this came through was her always putting, *Jesus, Mary, Joseph or All for Jesus through Mary* on the top of her letters and notes.

In going through Sr. Mary's file, I was delighted to find letters she received from Father Sigstein, Archbishop Noll and Mother Sigstein, not to mention poems she had written and several articles for "The Missionary Catechist" and other publications. There were letters to sisters and one note that I think illustrates Sr. Mary's great love of Our Blessed Mother. In it she explains that she wanted to celebrate her feast day, May 31, and not her birthday, November 5, because, "This was first 'Mary, Mediatrix of All Graces,' then 'Mary, Queen of the Universe' and now Mary of the Magnificat, the Visitation'. I can gladly accept them all. Please join me in prayer for world peace, that ALL nations may sing Magnificat!"

Sr. Mary's nephew, David, wrote of his aunt, "You introduced me to the constellations. I think you would have made a great scientist, you had a very sharp and inquiring mind." Anyone who knew Sr. Mary would have to agree with that statement. There were few subjects that did not interest her.

In reading through the poems and the scriptures she chose for her vigil I believe she had a deep feeling of being the beloved of God, and that Jesus was the one who spoke, as we read from the Song of Songs, " My lover speaks and says to me, 'Arise, my friend, my beautiful one, and come! For see, the winter is past, the rains are over and gone.'" (song of songs 2:10-11)

In the sharing after the vigil, many sisters spoke of Sr. Mary's enthusiasm for Victory Noll life and how her enthusiasm was one of the reasons they chose to enter Victory Noll. Sr. Mary's grand niece, Terry Davis, joined us and we also learned that Sr. Mary's ability to save every piece of paper and photo was a family trait that many of her siblings shared. She also shared that the family name for Sr. Mary, was Toots. There was laughter at some of the antics, activities and passion of Sr. Mary.

The gospel Sr. Mary had chosen for her funeral liturgy was that of Simeon in the temple at Jesus' presentation and her funeral was celebrated on February 2, the Feast of the Presentation. Father Fahey's homily spoke of "rest". He said, "Today God has invited Sister Mary Karl to enter into his rest. Sister is now sharing God's rest and forever. God is saying to her: Sister I am very pleased with what you have done. Come rest with me and share in my joy."

We are grateful, Sr. Mary Karl, for your faithful service in proclaiming the Gospel and yes, for you the winter is over, the rains are over and gone. Your beloved has called you to come and share his joy in heaven.

In the Name of Mary, Our Blessed Mother,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Sr. Ginger Downey".

Sr. Ginger Downey, OLVM
General Secretary

