

November 24, 1966

Dear Sisters,

*My soul magnifies the Lord and my spirit rejoices in God my Savior.* This thanksgiving song is on our lips and in our hearts as we rejoice in Sister Helen's triumph. May her prayers for us now bring us the light and strength we need in these crucial times.

Sister Helen's sudden death was a shock to all of us. Yet, as we meditate on it, the conviction grows that Sister Helen finished her journey to Our Father's home in a way that would have pleased her. She was busy about His business until the last moment of her life. Making dinner for Sister Martha and herself in Kendallville on the feast of the Presentation of Our Blessed Mother, Sister's strength gave out and she collapsed on the floor of the kitchen. Sister Martha found her there when she went to investigate the smell of burning muffins about 11:50 A.M. It had been about 11:30 when Sister Martha had left Sister Helen to go upstairs.

The pastor had gone to a meeting of the clergy with the Bishop in Fort Wayne, but Father Stadtherr, C.P.P.S., was called from Rome City, and he anointed Sister. Sister Elizabeth Ann and Sister Mary Christine went from Victory Noll to bring Sister Martha here, after arrangements had been made for the undertaker to bring Sister Helen's body to Huntington.

Victory Noll kept vigil from the time Sister Helen's body was brought to Holy Family reception room on Tuesday evening. Sister Marguerite had come on Monday. Mae and Sister Mary Loretta arrived by car on Tuesday afternoon. Father Srill from Detroit, and Mr. and Mrs. Ed. Srill from New Jersey, came on Wednesday. The funeral Mass, a concelebration, was offered at 10:30 A.M. this morning. Father Srill, the celebrant, was joined by Father Bell, Kendallville pastor, and two visiting priests.

Sister Helen entered when the Congregation was very young. As a member of the Board of Governors from 1928 to 1936, she helped our Founder to formulate the constitutions and rules to govern the new society. She was received in Gary on March 2, 1924. Her own sisters followed her into the Congregation--Sister Marguerite, in January 1926, and Sister Mary Loretta, in July 1929.

Sister Helen's missionary work included 2 years in New Mexico, 5 in Texas, during one of which she was superior in El Paso, 6 years as superior in Missouri, and 4 years as superior in Kendallville.

She was superior at Victory Noll in 1926 and from 1939 to 1944. She was elected Councilor-General Secretary in 1938, Vicar in 1941, and Councilor-General Secretary in 1956. In 1947 she was elected General Secretary. She edited THE MISSIONARY CATECHIST from 1944 until 1950 when she opened the mission in Flat River.

We know that Sister Helen was happy to be actively working in the Indiana mission field, and we feel sure she was ready to answer her call home. Father Mateo, the saintly priest who so eloquently preached devotion to the Sacred Heart, having met Sister Helen at Victory Noll, remarked: "There is nothing 'put on' about her." This was surely true. Sister Helen was loved by all of us for her sincerity and kindness.

Her funeral mass on Thanksgiving Day, in the month dedicated to the Souls in Purgatory, to whom she had special devotion, with many of her Sisters from the missions present, and her own priest-brother as celebrant, was a fitting close to a life full of service in loving imitation of Jesus and Mary.

*Sister Margaret Ann, General Secretary*