



SISTER ALODIA CARNEY, OLVM 92, died on November 23, 2020 at Saint Anne Communities at Victory Noll, Huntington, Indiana.

Sister Alodia was born in Royal Oak, Michigan, on April 30, 1928, to Patrick John Carney and Elodie Frappier Carney. She was baptized Elodie Alice on May 20, 1928, at Saint Mary's Catholic Church in Royal Oak. The family moved to the Carney farm outside of Cascade, Iowa, where Elodie was raised. One brother, Raymond Carney, and three sisters, Helen Carney, OLVM; Rose Mary Carney, OSF; and Lydia Carney, who died as a child, all precede her in death. Her eldest sister, Florence Smith, survives in Arlington Heights, Illinois.

Sister Alodia entered the Congregation of Our Lady of Victory Missionary Sisters on October 27, 1949, along with her sister Helen. They made first vows on August 5, 1952, and from that time on were in different parts of the county. Sister Alodia served in Texas, California, Iowa, Colorado, Michigan, and Indiana. She returned to Victory Noll in 2009 to minister to the Sisters in Holy Family Health Care facility, working to meet their personal needs. She fully retired to a ministry of prayer and presence in 2019, although she continued to be in contact with family and with the many people she had ministered with over the years.

Sister Alodia's first ministry assignment in 1952 was in San Antonio, Texas. She once mentioned that the poinsettias and pomegranate trees that grew in the yards and the palm trees that lined many of the streets in the barrio were very different from the corn and oat fields of her beloved home state of Iowa. She went on to share that she found sparseness and poverty in her ministry, something that would go on to mark many of the places where she ministered. In San Antonio, she taught the children's religion classes each day, usually outdoors because indoor space was limited and the little breeze available was a precious gift in the stifling heat.

Sister Alodia was a person who loved to learn, whether it was the local history of the many places she lived or in any area of religious education. She attended the University of Detroit, receiving a Bachelors of Arts degree in 1970 and a Master of Religious Education degree from the University of Saint Thomas in Houston, Texas, in 1975. She continued to do workshops and summer courses and was always interested in what was happening in the world of religious education and pastoral ministry. Even in retirement she would question me about the workshops I would attend and wanted to read the program. This was especially true of the Southwest Liturgical Conference.

For two years, 1979-1981, Sister Alodia, along with Sister Ann Shirley Kelly and two Capuchin priests, Jim Hast and Jim Mouer, formed the Evangelization Team in Huntington for the Diocese of Fort Wayne/ South Bend. Their ministry was to go out to everyone and

spread the “good news.” They did workshops, participated in civic as well as ecumenical programs and events. It was a ministry that fit very well with Sister Alodia’s love of home visiting and getting to know folks on a personal level. It was a mark that was with her throughout her Victory Noll life.

A few years later in 1987, Sister Alodia would do a similar ministry in the Diocese of San Angelo, Texas, lay ministry training program. The staff of the five Odessa parishes came together to meet the challenge of training people to meet the needs of the Church and serve the desires of the people. The team conducted training programs for Catechists, home visitors, liturgical ministers and ministers to the bereaved. The training was a three-year program and the people of west Texas responded and accepted the challenge from the Sunday Mass to “go in peace to love and serve the Lord.”

Throughout the years, Sister Alodia was proud of her OLVM religious community that called each member to a more conscious way of living. She believed the Sisters were a gift to the Church, and was excited to use those skills of gathering, teaching, and celebrating with people to enhance their lives and their relationship with God. She considered herself a “matchmaker,” putting people in touch with one another, so that together they could grow and flourish. She also loved the title of “Catechist,” the original title for the Sisters of the congregation. When she and her sister Helen wrote letters to each other — which they did quite often — they would address the envelope “Catechist Carney.”

Along with putting up bulletin boards for special occasions, Sister Alodia also liked to research each event, providing the history and sometimes trivia to the delight of her audience. She wrote reflections for several years for “Founder’s Day” on March 13 in memory of Father Sigstein. She also wrote poetry, and in later years even wrote for the Victory Noll blog on our website.

The rules limiting gathering during the COVID-19 pandemic forced us to change our usual rituals of a vigil and a Eucharistic liturgy. The Victory Noll Sisters honored and celebrated Sister Alodia on November 25, 2020, without the gathering of all the community, her family or her friends here in Huntington. The service was livestreamed. In this different atmosphere, we brought her earthly remains to the OLV Chapel where she had professed her first vows and started her journey as a Victory Noll Sister 71 years ago. On this day, we sent her not to an earthly mission, but to her final mission, where she will be welcomed for her faithful service and her deep love.

With Gratitude and Blessings,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Sr. Ginger Downey OLVM". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial 'G' and 'D'.

Sr. Ginger Downey, OLVM