

Victory Noll  
August 7, 1973

Dear Sisters

Come with joy into the presence of the Lord!

Sister Carmen Montoya sang the verses of Psalm 100 and the rest of us joined in the response to celebrate Sister Anna Blumenkemper's entrance into eternal life with the Lord. Our Liturgy of Christian Burial for Sister Anna was special in a number of ways. For many of our Sisters, it was their first opportunity to take part in the rite at Victory Noll. And Father Ambrose DeGroot, Capuchin, was the celebrant.

Father Ambrose, though unable to be present Sunday for the ceremonies, came to Victory Noll Monday to visit our silver jubilarians. He was happy that he could be here this morning to celebrate the Liturgy for Sister Anna.

Our last death in the community - Sister Mary Louise's - was on the eve of the feast of the Immaculate Conception almost two years ago. And now Our Blessed Mother came for Sister Anna on the eve of the special feast of our Congregation, Our Lady of the Snows. It was also the eve of the anniversary of Sister's first profession.

Sister's illness and death have been a real inspiration to all of us. Even before her surgery a year ago she suffered much pain. It must have been doubly hard because the doctors were not able then to diagnose her trouble. Since her surgery, Sister's suffering continued and increased daily. But she was always cheerful, always smiling. Of course we prayed for her and with her and often mentioned healing and a miracle. Not too long ago when someone spoke of a miracle she said, "But I've had a miracle! The miracle is that I am perfectly resigned to die when the Lord wants me." We can all envy a reply like that and even though many of us might not have the courage to speak in the same way, we can be proud of our dear Sister for her answer and pray that we will be given a like grace when the time is near for our own Passover.

Sister Anna's four brothers and four sisters were very devoted to her and came often to see her. Her sister, Sister William Marie, a School Sister of Notre Dame, spent many weeks this summer at Victory Noll. She had gone back to Missouri a couple of weeks ago but returned Saturday evening, August 4, and had the happiness of being with Sister when she died at 8:45 p.m. Sister was conscious to the end.

Sister Anna had received the sacrament of the sick a number of times during the past year when we had a communal celebration. Father Tom, one of the Capuchins, anointed her again a couple of weeks ago. She received Holy Communion daily until about the last week, when it became increasingly difficult for her to swallow even a tiny particle of the Sacred Host. Several days before she died, a visiting priest celebrated the Eucharist in her room and she was able to receive a few drops of the Precious Blood.

Sister Anna Blumenkemper was born in St. Louis September 4, 1918, the oldest of nine. Her parents are deceased. Sister came to the community in 1939 and was professed August 5, 1942. Sister's mission appointments included San Pedro, Santa Paula, and Redlands in California; Santa Fe, New Mexico; Sebring, Florida; Montrose, Colorado; and Brigham City, Utah.

All of Sister Anna's brothers, their wives and children, and her sisters were here for the services: the meeting of her body Monday afternoon, the wake service that night, and the Eucharist and burial Tuesday morning. Two of Sister's brothers, Raymond and Henry, were lectors. Nine nieces and nephews took part in the presentation of gifts. All were small children. Two carried ciboria, one the wine cruet and another the water.

The other five, including a child in his father's arms, carried a red rose. Father Ambrose himself took them from each little one and put them in a vase at the foot of the altar. The roses were incensed and blessed together with the other gifts! Four other nieces and nephews were unable to be here.

Besides Sister William Marie and Raymond and Henry, Sister is survived by Joseph, Robert, Eleanor, Teresa, and Mary.

Sister Anna's grave begins a new row - across from Sister Catherine Ann, Sister Evelyn, Sister Eva, Sister Mary Louise and the others.

Five of Sister's classmates were here for her funeral: Sisters Clarice May, Martha Wilke, Pauline Wapiennik, Mildred Weber, and Geraldine Christ. Four others had been here at some time during the summer: Sisters Florentine, Lurlien McCoy, Helen Flaspohler, and Helena Smith.

Yesterday's beautiful feast of the Transfiguration reminded us that some day we too will be transformed and share in the glory that is ours as children of the Father. We have that glory now as St. Paul tells us: "All of us, gazing on the Lord's glory with unveiled faces, are being transformed from glory to glory into his very image by the Lord who is the Spirit." (2 Cor. 3, 18) For Sister Anna the transfiguration is complete. Praise the Lord!

Devotedly in Jesus and Mary

*Sister Elizabeth Ann Clifford*

P.S. Because of the time element, and so many Sisters not in their missions, we did not use the telephone relay to let you know about Sister Anna's death.