



Here I am, Lord
Is it I, Lord?
I have heard you
calling in the night.
I will go, Lord
if you lead me
I will hold your people
in my heart.

(from Liturgy of Mass)

October 4, 1999

Dear Sisters:

Sister Eva Maria Sanchez was preparing a new year of religious education for adults and children at San Rafael parish in San Rafael, California. She was called again. It was the Lord leading her to another life, everlasting life.

While Sister did not seem herself for a few days she insisted she was well and feeling all right. She was found unconscious in her apartment Tuesday afternoon, September 21, and rushed to Marin General Hospital in Greenbrae, California. Her Advance Directive states her wishes clearly regarding medical treatment. The life supports were removed Wednesday and she died shortly afterward about 1:15 pm., September 22, 1999. Her sister, Irene Gonzalez, family members, Sister Catherine Johnson and friends of the parish were at her side praying and singing. As she died they sang, "When the Saints Come Marching In."

Sister Eva Maria Sanchez was born May 11, 1928 to Carlos and Ventura (Rivas) Sanchez in Fillmore, California. Both parents are deceased. Survivors are: two sisters, Irene Gonzalez, Los Angeles, California and Susan Austin, Fountain Valley, California.

Sister Eva Maria entered Our Lady of Victory Missionary Sisters congregation September 4, 1950 and professed first vows August 5, 1953. In her ministries in the parish religious education classes and the diocesan offices of religious education in California, Texas, Florida and Indiana Sister heard the call and proclaimed the Word of God. Besides traveling in our country she went to Mexico, Panama, Costa Rica and other countries announcing the Good News through congresses and workshops as well as encouraging others to do the same. Seminarians in Houston, Texas heard her message in classes while she was on the staff. She was also a member of the Leadership Team of our Community for four years, 1992-1996.

Some of the areas Sister ministered in were: Religious Education Office of San Bernardino, California; Religious Education Office of San Angelo, Texas; Religious Education Office of Miami, Florida; consultant, Silver Burdett Publishers; consultant, Sadlier Publishers.

In a story Sister Eva Maria wrote for a magazine she states:

"My family, teachers, employers and friends had a great deal to do with my initiation into and confirmation of a way of life filled with the challenge to discover the 'why's' and unfold the 'why not's'."

There was a Mass at San Rafael Church Friday evening. The body was brought to Memorial Chapel Monday afternoon. We gathered for the rosary at 4:30.

Sister Antoinette Golabowski was leader for the wake that evening. The schola led us with "Gather Us In" and Sisters Callista Ley and Marjorie Curran were readers. All extended their hands in blessing for Sister Eva Maria and sang our hymn, "Tu Eres La Victoria." Sisters told stories of enthusiasm, zeal and love when living or working with her.

Father Thomas Fahey presided at the Liturgy of Christian Burial, Tuesday morning, September 28. Sister Beatrice Haines played a prelude, "Dios Te Salve" and "Oh, Maria Madre Mia." Sister Dorothy Anne Lengerich was organist as the procession, Father Fahey, Sister Dorothy Louise Wortman and Sister Grace Marie Samblanet with the cross entered the chapel. All joined in singing "Here I Am, Lord."

Sister Mary Elise Allmaras and Sister Marian Kozlowski placed the pall and Sister Carolyn Louise Neff placed the symbol, a Bible. Isaiah 25: 6-9 was read by Sister Dorothy Louise and 2 Cor. 5 6-10 was read by Sister Marie Celine Ernst. Father Fahey read the Gospel, Luke 1: 39-45. Sister Beatrice's homily reflected Sister Eva Maria's life with the readings. Isaiah saw God's saving love as a lavish banquet. Sister had a gift for hospitality, cooking a good meal and eating with friends.

Sister Joan Arnold read the Intercessions. Sister Mary Magdalen Heim with her violin joined the organist to lead the singing of "Hail Mary, Gentle Woman" during the Preparation of Gifts. "Pescador de Hombres" in English/Spanish was the Communion Song.

Sister Mary Ellen Descourouez led the prayers at the Final Commendation and we sang "On Eagle's Wings." As we joined the procession to follow the cross and casket to the door we sang "How Great Thou Art."

It was a beautiful day as we walked to the cemetery. Father Fahey led us in prayers at the grave and we sang "We Have A Holy Mother."

Eva Maria, thank you for your generous sharing of those gifts with us in this life and also for that hearty laugh we enjoyed so often. We trust you will remember us to Jesus and Mary, and we will remember you in prayer.

Sincerely yours,

Sister Marjorie Curran
General Secretary