



SISTER MONICA HAINES, OLVM, died on November 23, 2020, at Saint Anne Communities at Victory Noll, Huntington, Indiana. She was 90 years old.

Sister Monica was the third child born to Samuel and Agnes (Grise) Haines. She was born in Goshen, Indiana, on June 23, 1930. She was baptized Monica Cecilia, just two weeks later on July 6, 1930, at St. John's Catholic Church, Goshen. Her brother, Samuel Haines, Jr., precedes her in death. Three sisters, Sister Beatrice Haines, OLVM, Dorothy Rassi, and Theresa Copenhaver, all of Huntington, survive Sister Monica. Having Dorothy, Theresa and Theresa's husband Dick, move to Saint Anne Communities at Victory Noll was a joy for Monica as she was able to visit with them more easily these last few years.

Sister Monica had a special relationship with her brother Sam. He was just a year older and after being held back in first grade due to poor eyesight, Sam and Monica were in the same grade. This often led to being asked if they were twins. The bond of being "almost twins" continued throughout grade school and high school. They walked and then later rode their bikes to school; they rocked in the rocking chair in the front room and on the swing on the front porch. They also played all the usual back yard games for hours during the summer. In the fall of 1948, after graduating from high school, Monica entered Victory Noll. Sam moved west to California. It was the end of one chapter but not the end of the closeness they felt throughout their lives.

After making first vows on August 5, 1951, Sister Monica's first mission was to Coachella, California. She would remain in California for the first 10 years before going to Siena Heights College in Adrian, Michigan, where she received her bachelor's degree in Sociology with a minor in Philosophy. In 1974, she received her master's degree from the University of Saint Thomas in Houston, Texas, in Religious Education. Throughout her years of ministry beyond Victory Noll and California, Sister Monica would also serve in the states of Michigan, New Mexico, Texas and Illinois.

Religious Education was Sister Monica's focus throughout her life and as Vatican II started to move from religious education into faith formation, she came to realize that working with adults was her special area of ministry. She especially saw the need for adult education in rural communities and concentrated her energy on spirituality and sharing of faith. Sister Monica once stated, "A deepening of faith will help to enrich the lives of the people and give them a basis for their daily struggles." She shared her faith and religious commitment with everyone she met by witnessing with her life as an example of true faithfulness.

Sister Monica returned to Victory Noll to retire in 2005 but instead she started ministering to the Sisters who were aging and needing some personal assistance. She ministered to the Sisters with her steady, calm and a peaceful presence.

Many Saturday afternoons would find Sister Monica enjoying one of her favorite pastimes, football, especially Notre Dame football! If Notre Dame was not playing, you might find her taking part in her other of her favorite activities, a good game of cards. Many evenings and some afternoons, you could find Sister Monica sitting at the table playing cards, usually 500. In the reflection she wrote for Sam's funeral, she mentioned playing cards, specifically pinochle, as a kid into the wee hours of the morning while on summer vacation on Lake Wawasee or Stone Lake.

When Sister Monica entered the congregation as Missionary Sister of Our Lady Victory, she made an act of consecration to Mary, which was a renewal of her baptismal commitment. It is at the heart of our Victory Noll Spirituality and is expressed in our motto, "All for Jesus through Mary," which is the saying Sister Monica chose to have on her memorial card. Through this consecration, we offer our work, the gift of our lives and even the end of our lives. It is an expression of total surrender to God. A gift of self, which is one expression of Mary, Our Blessed Mother. As Sister Monica's health began to decline and she was starting to realize that her time here was becoming shorter, she accepted it as she did so many things, with a deep faith and her unruffled demeanor. In one of the last conversations with Sister Monica, her sister, Sister Beatrice, witnessed this conscious, loving surrender found in the act of consecration. It was Sister Monica once again surrendering her life into God's hands.

The rules during the COVID-19 pandemic forced us to change our usual rituals of a vigil and a Eucharistic liturgy. In this different atmosphere, we brought Sister Monica's earthly remains to the Our Lady of Victory Chapel on November 27, 2020, the same chapel where she had professed her first vows and started her journey as a Victory Noll Sister. The service was live-streamed for her family, her friends and the Victory Noll sisters who live beyond Victory Noll. We did not send her out to do ministry. We sent her home to God, where she will be welcomed for her faithful service, her love, and peace filled presence.

With Gratitude and Blessings,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Sr. Ginger Downey OLM". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Sr. Ginger Downey, OLM