

Victory Noll
1900 West Park Drive
Huntington, Indiana 46750
January 11, 1983

Dear Sisters,

". . . You are my beloved Son. On You, my favor rests!" Mark 1:11

On Sunday morning January 9, at 11:16 a.m. on the feast of The Baptism of Our Lord, Sister Hildegard Bromenschenkel died peacefully in the Lord. We were just beginning the "Lamb of God" in the celebration of the Eucharist. While we were celebrating our rebirth in baptism on this special feast, she was beginning the revelation of her new life in Christ where there is only peace and joy forever.

Today, January 11, after a very joyful and meaningful liturgy celebrated by Sister Hildegard's nephew, Father Larry Hubbard in which her sisters Marie and Loretta with all the nieces, nephews and grand-nephews participated, we brought Sister's body to rest in the Victory Noll cemetery.

Sister Hildegard had serious surgery in December of 1981. She "seemed" to make a recovery but it didn't last. In June of 1982 she visited her family in St. Cloud. There, her condition worsened and she had to resort to Cobalt treatment. On September 17, 1982, Sister returned to Victory Noll and soon after was under the care of Oncologists at St. Joseph's hospital. On October 12, she was admitted to St. Joseph's hospital where it was determined the cancer was much advanced throughout the abdomen. Sister returned to Victory Noll. Medication did not give her much relief and really made her so ill that she was unable to eat most of the time. To relieve her pain, Sister Hildegard sat up night and day bent over almost double. During the last two weeks of her life, she took only ice chips and water.

We were so happy that some of Sister's family came to visit her. Father Larry and his sister Evelyn with her son Mark were here in October and a few days later several of the nieces and nephews brought Loretta and Marie so they could have a visit with Sister.

Sister received the Sacrament of the Sick January 1, 1983 from Father Jim Hast OFM cap., our chaplain. Father Larry returned that week to celebrate Mass in Sister's room. Father stayed until Wednesday morning when he had to leave. Loretta returned by plane on the seventh to be with Sister. During the day the Sisters would pray quietly in her room. Her classmates, Sisters Mary Karl, Helen Collis and Gertrude Spetter spent much time with her. Loretta with Sisters Virginia Schmitt, Helen Collis, Mary Ellen Dooley, Mary Dorothy Schneider and Marie Welter were with Sister when she died.

Sister Hildegard would have celebrated her Golden Jubilee this year. Her fifty years of service have been active ones indeed in the missionary fields of Texas, New Mexico, California, Colorado, Nevada, Wyoming and Indiana. Twice Sister served as Superior in Las Vegas, New Mexico and in Greeley, Colorado. Some of the Sisters were recalling their experiences with Sister Hildegard in the days of long ago. I had to smile at her sense of humor in a story she had submitted to TMC in 1940. It seems that the Catechists had to sing for the celebration of Mass in the cemetery on All Souls Day. They took the organ and the music but no chair. On the way to Gallinas for class, the Catechists stopped at the cemetery to sing but found nothing to sit on. Examining every headstone, they finally saw the solution to their problem. A foot-high curbing became the make-shift seat and the Catechist adjusted herself to the new seat and Father had music for the Mass! I was trying to picture someone sitting on a foot high curbing and playing a portable organ!

Sister Hildegard was born September 24, 1905 in St. Cloud, Minnesota the youngest of eight children. She entered the Congregation from the parish of St. Augustine in St. Cloud, February 2, 1933 and made first profession of vows at Victory Noll March 25, 1936.

Sister is survived by two sisters and two brothers: Mrs. Mary Prom, Loretta, Ben and Leo Bromenschenkel of St. Cloud, Minnesota. Ben and Leo were unable to attend because of illness.

Present for the funeral were Marie and Loretta with the following nieces, nephews and grand-nephews: Father Larry Hubbard, Mrs. Irene Lick and David DuPaul from St. Paul; Don and Mary Prom, Mrs. Lucille Zabinski of Bowlus, Minn.; Mary, Ray and Karen Bromenschenkel and Mrs. Lorraine Hill of St. Cloud; Theresa and Gilbert Stock of St. Joseph, Minn. and Scott Hansen of Clear Lake, Minnesota.

The Mass of Christian Burial was concelebrated by Father Larry Hubbard and Father Jim Hast, OFM cap. In his homily, Father Larry spoke of celebrating Sister's death because we believe in life not death and because Sister shared her life with so many others. Just as Christ was the original grain of wheat to die and give life, so also her dying was redemptive! She came to know the Lord in a special way and this love was the basis of her ministry to others. This love relationship which helped her to draw others to Christ was nurtured by prayer and the Eucharist.

He also spoke of her being transplanted many times and this too was the cause of dying and rising to a new dimension of love in Christ. She journeyed for 50 years in the missions and had a tremendous influence upon others. Because she loved and lived the paschal mystery, the continual dying and rising in Christ, she was able to touch others and share the Good News with them. Father ended his homily with a beautiful prayer of thanksgiving and praise to God that he bless the journey of Sister Hildegard into eternity which she began to walk so many years ago.

Sister Virginia led the prayers of commendation at the end of the liturgy. It was cold but nice and we walked out to the cemetery for the final blessing at the grave. Dinner followed immediately because the family wanted to get an early start on the long journey home.

Sister Hildegard was in our West Wing in OLV building several summers ago and I came to love her very much. She was such a joy to be with! I had never been around Sister very much before that. Sister's classmates spoke so beautifully of her -- each one stressed the same outstanding quality which described her well -- "She had an all-embracing kindness reaching out to everyone in love!" Another said so well: "She never made life unpleasant for anyone, she was a joy to live with!" Another said she was a wonderful person to come home to after a hard day's work because she was so understanding and interested in everything that happened. Another said: "She made a big difference in my life!" How grateful we are for this lovely reflection of the Father's love in Sister Hildegard. It seems to me that she could have been met with this loving statement: ". . . you are my beloved daughter. On you my favor rests!"

Lovingly in Jesus and Mary,

Sister Germaine Staller