

## IN MEMORIAM



# Sr. Margaret Mary Imes

(Sister Mary Innocent)

BORN: October 1915

ENTERED CONGREGATION: March 12, 1936

DIED: July 3, 2008

**T**ODAY we celebrate the entrance into everlasting life of Sister Margaret Mary Imes. We extend a special welcome to her niece Karen, Karen's two daughters and granddaughter, as well as Sister Margaret Mary's dear friends Bette, Judy, Cecilia and Theresa.

In October 1915, in the wide open spaces of Kansas City, Ks., Gertrude Margaret Mary Imes was welcomed into the home of her parents, Frances Margaret Ross Imes and Carl Lester Imes. Gertrude was the oldest in the family — her sister Frances could not be with us today; her other siblings, Roxana, Charles and Carl, welcomed her into heaven.

While Gertrude was still young she lived in Savannah and then St. Joseph, Mo. It was here at St. Francis Xavier Parish that Gertrude became acquainted with the Sisters of the Precious Blood. Sister Innocentia Vurpillat guided Gertrude as she discerned her choice at age 21 to become a Sister of the Precious Blood. She left for Dayton, Ohio in the spring of 1936.

"The most important and tremendous moment of my life was my acceptance into the family of the Sisters of the Precious Blood," she later wrote.

Gertrude received the religious name Sister Mary Innocent, but later chose to be known as Sister Margaret Mary.

Having received her bachelor's degree in education from the Athenaeum of Ohio, Margaret Mary spent the next

nine years in Dayton, Cleveland and Burkettsville, Ohio teaching primary grades.

However, deep within her was the longing to be a nurse. Prompted by a sister companion, Margaret Mary made her desire known. She graduated as a registered nurse in 1953 from Good Samaritan Hospital School of Nursing in Dayton. She continued to be an avid learner throughout her life, demonstrated by the more more than 35 certificates of continuing education she earned.

For the next three years, Sister Margaret Mary utilized her nursing skills at Lourdes Hall, Dayton, and Kneipp Springs, Ind. Then in January 1956 she was called back to teaching and spent the next 10 years in a dual role of teacher or nurse in Ohio, Indiana, California and Arizona.

In the summer of 1967 Sister Margaret Mary moved strictly into nursing and served at three hospitals in California before beginning her sojourn with the Native Americans in Arizona. Here she could apply her nursing skills and attend to the needs of the poor, a service she deeply loved.

She ministered as supervisor of the Navajo Extended Care Facility and later as director of nursing in the Federal Indian Health Service in Chinle, Ariz. In January 1979 she moved to Sells Hospital in Sells, Ariz., where she served the Papago/Tohono O'odham nation in the emergency and out-patient departments. In all, Margaret Mary served on these Native American reservations for over 20 years.

Having turned 80, Margaret Mary retired in Dayton, where she continued to minister in this community setting until her health conditions could be better met through nursing care at Emma Hall.

A friend from San Luis Rey, California, speaks of Margaret Mary as having an absolute horror of injustices and even enduring personal hardships to right a wrong. For a person of such tiny stature, her friend continued, "she has the courage and tenacity of a lioness defending her cubs." This same friend applied this quote [adapted] of Thomas Merton to Margaret Mary:

"One of the greatest paradoxes of the mystical life is this:

That a person a cannot enter into the deepest center of herself and pass through that center into God, unless she is able to pass entirely out of herself and empty herself and give herself to other people in the purity of a selfless love."

Margaret Mary, I believe this friend caught the depths of your living in the presence of God, our Precious Blood Spirituality, and your lived vows as a Precious Blood Sister.

In traditional Navajo language we now hear you calling out to us, "Yah-ta-hey!" "Hello! All is well!"

Yes, all is well for you. Praise God for all eternity!

—Sister Madonna Ratermann