

## IN MEMORIAM



# Sr. Marie Langhals

(Sister Mary Jamesine)

BORN: January 1936

ENTERED CONGREGATION: January 31, 1954

DIED: May 30, 2007

**M**ARIE came into our lives 57 years ago when she joined the rest of us, her classmates, to become Fatima Hall's first freshmen. The community hasn't really been the same since! Sister Madonna and I have prepared this eulogy about our dear Marie not as president or councilor, but rather as sister, friend and classmate.

Those freshman days were a long time ago. Julie and Kelly, you weren't even born! Henry, you were only one year old! Elmer, Ken, Alvie (that's what Marie always called you), Ruth, Pat and, of course dearest Jim — you were the brothers and sisters Marie cherished and the primary reason why it was so hard for her to leave her home in Columbus Grove, Ohio. We are so privileged to welcome all of you, her precious family members, treasured relatives and dear friends to celebrate with us this resurrection liturgy.

Marie cherished us, her family of the Sisters of the Precious Blood. How she enriched us with her presence, her deep prayer life, her incredible integrity, her strength in adversity, her genuine hospitality, her love and commitment to community, her compassion, her tenderness, her sense of humor — and these merely scratch the surface of this genuinely sterling woman. With loving appreciation, we two families join in celebrating the gift of Marie.

Let us now travel back 71 years. It was then that Marie was welcomed into the Columbus Grove home of Carl and Veronica (Schroeder) Langhals on a very cold and snowy day in January 1936, the first of their 10 children. Six years later Marie crossed the threshold of St. Anthony School where she became acquainted with the Sisters of the Precious Blood. Work and study were a very important part of the Langhals family, but not to the exclusion of fun times as well. Baseball (including a broken window or two), basketball and cards were ongoing family enter-

tainment. Birthday and holiday parties and the celebration of the sacraments brought much joy into their home.

Marie writes that her first call to religious life came on the day of her First Holy Communion, when she "had a profound experience of the intimacy of God." All through her grade school years Marie experienced this pull toward being a sister. In junior high, however, setting aside this religious life attraction, Marie described to her mother the kind of husband she would be looking for! When her mother clearly advised her that there was no man who could measure up, Marie refocused her decision to become an aspiring member of the Sisters of the Precious Blood!

In 1953 Marie graduated from high school at Fatima Hall. Then in 1965 she obtained a bachelor's of science in education degree from the University of Dayton; in 1971 another, bachelor's of arts in theology from St. Joseph College in Rensselaer, Ind. In preparation for her future work in formation, Marie attended the Institute of Religious Formation at St. Louis University during the 1992-1993 academic year.

As courses and degrees were being pursued, Marie was also teaching at parish schools in Ohio. From 1956 through 1973 she taught in North College Hill, Ottawa, Dayton, and Centerville, as well as in the Coldwater public schools. Wanting to become more involved in religious education, Marie spent the next 16 years as teacher, principal, director of religious education or pastoral associate at other Ohio parishes: St. Henry Catechetical Center in St. Henry; Mary Help of Christians, Fairborn; St. Thomas Aquinas, Zanesville; and Ascension in Kettering.

Always open to God's movement in her life, Marie accepted a very special but most appropriate call from our CPPS community. In 1993 Marie said yes to serving as novice directress and several years later, in this position, Marie

became a member of the newly formed CPPS Vocation/Formation Team.

In the fall of 2005, Marie's plans to move to Delaware, Ohio, to serve as a parish minister were thwarted when a visit to the doctor ended with a diagnosis of extensive cancer.

Devastating as this was, Marie was no stranger to physical challenges. Earlier in her religious life she had experienced four back, one eye and three ear surgeries. Marie's ongoing struggle with the pain of rheumatoid arthritis gave her pain tolerance. Through all of her physical discomfort, including the ravages of cancer, Marie handled her handicaps and very seldom complained. Many of you have Sister Marie Langhals probably heard Marie say, "Let me sit here, my good ear is on this side." At each turn Marie surrendered herself to the will of God and was an artist at putting a positive slant on each step in her journey — never wanting to draw attention to herself. Marie is one of the greatest among us, always willing to serve the rest.

With these few words we have tried to eulogize a valiant woman whose inclusive heart embraced everyone. Marie meant so much to so many people. Everyone in this chapel could add a sentence from their perspective that would reveal yet another sparkle on the face of this diamond we called Marie. Marie often used expressions like, "O, give me a break!" or "You've got that right!" Marie, we hope we've given you that break, and that we truly got it right.

On the occasion of her golden jubilee, Marie used the words of Mary's Magnificat to express her feelings on the experiences of her life's journey. We close this eulogy with her words: "I want to rejoice and say with Mary, the Mother of God, 'My being proclaims the greatness of God, my spirit rejoices in God my Savior.'"

—Sister Maryann Bremke and  
Sister Madonna Ratermann