

IN MEMORIAM



Sr. M. Violetta Schwertner

BORN: December 1910

ENTERED CONGREGATION: December 31, 1931

DIED: September 29, 2008

WE Sisters of the Precious Blood welcome the nieces, nephews, relatives and friends of Sister Violetta to this celebration of her life. While she will be dearly missed, who among us cannot picture the sparkle in her eyes and the delight of pure joy on her face as she looks upon us today from her heavenly home.

At the beginning of one of my last visits with Sister Violetta, she told me, most strongly, that there was something she wanted said at the beginning of her eulogy. She wanted it repeated twice and then she wanted everyone present to say it: God is good! God is good... I doubt if anyone present here who visited Violetta ever left her room without hearing those words.

Mary Teresa was born in Glandorf, Ohio, in December 1910. She was one of eight children, four boys and four girls, born to David and Mary (Moening) Schwertner. She described her family as a happy one whose members "brought much joy to each other." Although all of her brothers and sisters preceded her in death, family connections remained important and continued through her relationships with her nieces and nephews.

Mary was taught by the Sisters of the Precious Blood both in elementary and high school at Glandorf. After graduation she worked for one year at St. Rita's Hospital in Lima before entering the congregation on December 31, 1931. She received the name Sister Mary Violetta.

Violetta's classroom career spanned nearly 60 years, beginning in 1934 at Bryant, Indiana. Although she taught in Indiana and North Dakota, most of her teaching years were spent in Ohio: St. Joseph Home and St. Mary's School in Dayton; public schools in Marywood/Bellevue, New Riegel and Ottoville. She taught in Catholic schools at Queen of Peace in Millville, Our Lady of the Rosary in St. Mary's and St. Anthony School in Columbus Grove.

She loved children and enjoyed teaching. Her time at the orphanage [St. Joseph Home] was especially rewarding as, in her words, she served as mother, teacher and angel!

Preparing children for First Communion was always a graced time for her. Perhaps that had much to do with the love she herself had for Jesus in the Eucharist.

It was while she was at Columbus Grove that Violetta formally retired from teaching, though she still served as a teacher's aide and/or did some substitute teaching. After 17 years there she knew it was time to come home to Salem Heights, which she did in 1992.

She remained here until declining health necessitated her move to Emma Hall at the Maria-Joseph Living Care Center in 2001. Violetta often commented how nice everything was at Emma and how good the staff was to her. She had a heartfelt sense of gratitude for the care and attention she received and was quick to say thank you.

In reflecting on the life of Sister Violetta,

several of her personal qualities come easily to mind, one of the first being her deep faith and love of God which she shared so freely. Her sense of humor also ranks high. She loved life and could find the humorous side in much of it. She was humble, recognizing the gifts God had given her and not taking credit for them in and of herself. She loved people and her warm, welcoming, caring personality could make anyone feel at home. Up until the very end, Violetta was blessed with a clear mind still eager to learn more, especially if it had anything to do with knowing and loving God more and more deeply. The Eternal Word Television Network lost one of its best viewers when Violetta went home to God!

On September 29, the day of her death, we celebrated the feast of the archangels Michael, Gabriel and Raphael. The psalm response for that day's liturgy was, "In the presence of the angels I will sing your praise." How fitting that refrain was for the death day of one who served God with such joy and gratitude.

How fitting it is that on the evening of October 2, when we recounted so many stories about Sister Violetta, we celebrated the feast of the Guardian Angels.

We know that Violetta is actually part of that glorious choir singing God's praises. As we prepare to celebrate her life in this Eucharistic liturgy, let us honor her by saying together, one more time, the words she wants us to remember every day of our lives: "God is good!"

—Sister Jeanette Buehler