



WHAT'S INSIDE?

Four Sisters Say Goodbye to Wichita Falls
In Memoriam
Oremus - Let Us Pray

OREMUS – LET US PRAY

Prayer is a significant part of the Sisters' lives and ministry. Frequently someone will say, "Sister, please pray for me." In this new section of our Connections newsletter, we would like to offer you the opportunity to reflect on your understanding of prayer and, in future editions, explore various ways of praying.

As you read this right now, pause, take a few minutes for yourself, reflect and ponder: What do I understand about "prayer"? How would I explain or present "prayer" to someone who desires to know more about it? Pause, jot down some notes for yourself and after you have pondered for a while, consider the following examples:

- Prayer is the raising of the mind and heart to God. [Catholic Encyclopedia]
- Prayer is a conscious relationship with God. [Fr. Bill Barry, S.J.]
- Prayer can be defined as opening to God. In true prayer we expose ourselves to God. Prayer can also be defined as the experience of connecting with God. Prayer is a longing for greater union with God. Prayer is glimpsing the beauty of God. Prayer is a personal relationship with God. [PRAYER: A Handbook for Today's Catholic]
- Include your own definition/explanation of prayer.

Let us pray for each other until your next issue of Connections arrives!



MEET SISTER GUADALUPE — A SSMN TWO TIMES OVER

Sister Guadalupe (Lupe) Aranda was born to migrant workers as the first of 10 children. Her mother named her Guadalupe in fulfillment of a promise she made to the Blessed Mother when the midwife told the family mother and baby would not survive the delivery.

When Sister Lupe was a child preparing for her First Communion, she was told how much Jesus loves us, even dying on a cross for us. She wanted to love Him back like He loved her. When she learned about the Sisters and how they loved God totally and give their lives to Him, she made becoming a Sister her life goal. She joined the SSMN in 1964.

Sister Lupe first went to Africa, then to Brazil, growing her love for Jesus through intense prayer and service with the Sisters. After returning to the U.S., she spent time working with abused children and troubled youth before leaving the SSMN.

After the passing of 20 years, God started calling her to come closer to Him. Through prayer and spiritual guidance, Sister Lupe returned to the Sisters. She was welcomed by the SSMN in a special ceremony on November 11, 2022, the anniversary of the founding of the SSMN. Sister Lupe now lives and works at OLV Center.



Sr. Lupe receives her SSMN cross at her reception ceremony.



Father Ken anoints Sister Lupe's hands on the day of the anointing of all Sisters.



Sister Anselma, Sister Lupe and Sister Roberta together at OLV Center



Sister Roberta, Sister Lupe and Sister Anselma together at OLV Center

FOUR SISTERS SAY GOODBYE TO WICHITA FALLS



Sisters Ginny Vissing, Patricia Ste Marie, Clara Vo and Mary Jean Warmuth at their grand reception

The Sisters of St. Mary first settled in Wichita Falls in 1905. Many Sisters have come and gone over the last 117 years; however, a few came and stayed for a long time. **Sister Ginny Vissing** lived and served there for 54 years, **Sister Patricia Ste. Marie** for the last 52 years and **Sister Mary Jean Warmuth** for 35 years.

Originally, Sr. Ginny taught first grade, Sr. Patricia taught high school religion and Sister Mary Jean also taught in the elementary school. **Sister Clara Vo** also served in Wichita Fall in recent years.

While there, Sisters Ginny and Patricia founded Shalom Community, a number of households designed for women in

need of healing by the Holy Spirit. These small groups lived and prayed together. The communities, which continued for 21 years, met a true need in Wichita Falls.

The Sisters are now retired and in November moved to OLV Center in Fort Worth. As they have worked through the sadness of leaving their longtime friends and home, they remain joyful and are appreciative for the loving assistance and companionship they receive at the Center.

The Notre Dame and Wichita Falls communities demonstrated their appreciation and bid the Sisters farewell with a Mass, celebrated by **Bishop**



Michael Olson, and a grand reception on November 27. The crowd of people in attendance shared their memories and gratitude for the gift of these four Sisters.

SISTER TERESA HONKOMP

May 10, 1933 – Jan. 26, 2023



Sister Teresa Honkomp

Sister Teresa Honkomp was born in Wichita Falls, Texas, the eighth of nine children. She was educated at the Academy of Mary Immaculate from Grades 1 to 12, graduating in 1951. She entered the Sisters of St. Mary of Namur in the fall of that year. She

attended Our Lady of Victory College and earned her Bachelor's in Education from Our Lady of the Lake College in San Antonio and her Master's in Education from Texas Women's University in Denton.

Leaving the Novitiate in 1954, she dedicated most of her life to the education of the young, teaching primarily in elementary and middle schools, often serving as principal. She taught in most of the schools served by the Sisters of St. Mary in Texas: Dickinson, Fort Worth, Dallas, Houston, and Beaumont.

After some thirty years as a classroom teacher, Sister Teresa participated in a sabbatical semester at a retreat house in Hawkestone, England. It was there that she developed an affection for light-houses.

When she returned to Texas, she taught with the Incarnate Word Sisters at St. Vincent de Paul School in Houston for ten years. Sister then joined the community at OLV Center and taught and served as assistant principal at OLV Elementary. Following her retirement from teaching, Sister served as sacristan at the Center and continued to substitute for the principal when needed. She often prepared liturgical celebrations for the students. In her spare time, she took art lessons and produced some works which merited entry in the Texas State Fair. Even these last years, she continued with her art work.

Among her surviving family are her niece, Miss Judy Winaski, also a former teacher at OLV Elementary, and her brother, Edward and his wife, Susie.

SISTER MARY MICHAEL DITTOE

Aug. 23, 1923 – Dec. 8, 2022

Sister Mary Michael was born in Dallas, Texas, but lived in Wichita Falls, and attended the Academy of Mary Immaculate there for three years. After the death of her mother, she became a boarder for eight years at St. Joseph Academy in Sherman, where her aunt, Sr. Marguerita Dittoe taught. Following her graduation, Sister entered the Sisters of St. Mary, following three aunts into the Congregation: Sister Marguerita, Sister Florence, and Sister Marie Vincentia Dittoe. When she celebrated 80 years as a religious, Sister Mary Michael could say that counting her years as a boarder, she had "lived in the convent" for 88 years! That's a record!

Sister Mary Michael was a person of many talents. Sister spent some 40 years teaching elementary school classes: at Holy Name School in Fort

Worth for two years, St. Xavier Academy in Denison for three, St. Anne School in Beaumont for six, St. Cecilia School in Dallas for two, Resurrection School in Houston for two, and OLV Elementary School for seven years. Wherever she was assigned, Sister Mary Michael also taught piano and classroom singing.

After the Vatican Council, many Sisters were called to work in new venues. Sister Mary Michael spent a year at Magnificat House in Houston, helping to create communities for homeless people. From 1993 to 2005, Sister worked in pastoral ministry in Knox City and Crowell with her great friends **Sr. Rita Claire** and **Sr. Ann Vincent**, doing catechetical instruction, teaching English as a Second Language, directing the choir, and playing the organ for liturgical services in the parish.



Sister Mary Michael

Even after macular degeneration curtailed her activities, Sister took classes at TCC and added knitting to her list of accomplishments, thanks to the Senior Education Department's provision of magnifying equipment. When she could no longer knit, she spent her time, as she laughingly said, with "lots of praying."

She very much enjoyed visits with her cousin, **Mary Dittoe Kelley**, who often drops by OLV Center with baked gifts including her specialty of delicious brownies.

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A Story of Hard Work and Hope