

June 29, 2000

“Like a shepherd He feeds His flock and gathers the lambs in His arms;
holding them carefully, close to His heart, leading them home.”

(Ez 34:11)

Dear Sisters,

On this eve of the Solemnity of the Sacred Heart and Sister Marie Adele’s anniversary of profession, the Good Shepherd has led her home. This, her favorite image of Jesus, was Sister’s consolation and her challenge. We were privileged and graced to travel with Sister Adele on her journey through life, illness, and death.



Sister Marie Adele - Marie Adele Hawxhurst
Born: July 1, 1937 in New Orleans, Louisiana
Professed: June 30, 1959
Died: June 29, 2000 in Reading, Pennsylvania

When Sister Marie Adele entered the community, she brought with her a faith and generosity nurtured by her loving family. She was the youngest of six children. With courage, she entered our missionary congregation at a great distance from home. The colorful culture of her native New Orleans never left her, however, and was often the inspiration for her humor.

Sister Marie Adele spent thirty-three years teaching young children in our Catholic schools. Her ministry of education took her to various schools in Pennsylvania as well as to the distant states of Illinois, Mississippi, and Louisiana. Like the Good Shepherd, she was drawn to whomever and wherever the need was greatest, giving herself generously for those in her care. Sister Adele was one of the pioneers sent to the poorest county in the state of Mississippi in 1989 to teach at St. Gabriel School. Here in Mound Bayou, she not only met the challenges of the many faces of poverty, but she also blossomed.

Sister’s greatest challenge came in the form of cancer surgery and a series of treatments. That journey began in 1997. She returned to the Motherhouse in June of 1999 for more surgery and extensive treatment. Hers was a very painful path, but with every step she drew strength

from the words, "Even though I walk through the dark valley, I fear no evil, for you are with me; your rod and your staff give me courage." (Psalm 23)

Sister Marie Adele's brothers and sisters were a great comfort to her. Throughout her illness, they traveled great distances to be with her. During her final week of life on this earth, they remained at her bedside. Their faith and love were an inspiration to all. Sister Adele's uncomplaining spirit, deep appreciation, and keen desire to be of help were clear signs of the peace that filled her heart. "Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life and I shall dwell in the house of the Lord forever." (Psalm 23) It was in this serenity that Sister laid down her life this morning.

The Mass of Resurrection and burial will be celebrated on Saturday, July 1, 2000, at 10:00 a.m. in the Motherhouse on her sixty-third birthday.

Clearly, the Loving Shepherd has gathered Sister Marie Adele in His arms and holds her close to His Heart. Alleluia! Alleluia!

In the One Heart,

Sister Lorraine Molchanow, M.S.C.