

October 8, 2000

"I will walk in the presence of the Lord in the land of the living."
(Psalm 116:9 - Evening Prayer of Friday, week 2)

Dear Sisters,

During the early hours of the evening, these words of the psalm became a reality for Sister Mary Louise. For weeks, Sister seemed to be suspended between death and life. Finally God called her home to live in His eternal presence.



Sister Mary Louise - Bernardine A. Shigo
Born: June 1, 1923 in Coaldale, PA
Professed: August 26, 1943
Died: October 6, 2000 in Reading, PA

In 1937, Sister Mary Louise left her family in Coaldale, one of the mining towns of Pennsylvania, to join the aspirants' school of St. Michael's. Following her novitiate, Sister spent two years as a kindergarten teacher in Bethlehem. She was then sent to study nursing at Sacred Heart Hospital in Allentown.

From 1949 until her retirement in 1997, Sister's life centered around the care of the sick. She worked in Allentown, in Sacred Heart Hospital in Norristown, in St. Mary's in Athens, Georgia, and for 17 years at Good Samaritan Hospital in Pottsville. In the course of her nursing career, Sister held various supervisory positions in the medical-surgical, pediatric, and orthopedic departments. She was also supervisor of our health care unit at St. Michael's.

The last twelve years of Sister's apostolic ministry were spent in the eye clinic at Sacred Heart where she had received her training 40 years earlier. These last years were difficult ones as Sister suffered from a serious heart problem, yet deeply desired to continue her own healing ministry to others.

Sister Mary Louise was an excellent nurse, a capable and inspiring supervisor, and a dedicated religious. In addition to these professional qualities, Sister possessed the art of being especially friendly with staff and patients.

Family was always a very important part of Sister's life. She had immense pride in her priest brother who is a member of the Society of the Divine Word. In the last years of her life, she took on the

ministry of suffering to obtain graces for those whose lives were touched by him. Sister often spoke of her brothers and sister, of nieces and nephews. Each was a very important part of her life. During the last hours and at the last moment of her life, her sister Rita, who had been a faithful visitor and caregiver, was at her side.

Sister Mary Louise's last months were especially difficult. We are grateful to Sister for the example of her life and trust that she will continue to intercede for us.

On Tuesday, October 10, 2000, at 11:00 a.m., the Mass of Christian Burial will be celebrated for Sister by her brother, Father Francis Shigo, SVD. Sister will then be laid to rest in our convent cemetery.

United in the Heart of Jesus,

Sister Marie Clark, R.S.C.