

December 1, 1992

"I have come that they may have life and have it to the full."

(John's Gospel, 10:10)

Dear Sisters,

The above quotation from St. John's Gospel makes me think of the life of Sister Bernardice. She truly loved life and lived it to the full. Or one might say she simply loved God and others and because of this, radiated so much joy. She reached out to everyone and in reaching out was a living example of our charism. She loved to give pleasure to others and to make them happy. Today, around 6:15 P.M., God gave her a much fuller experience of the abundant life as He welcomed her into His kingdom.

For about two or three weeks she complained of terrible headaches. She also found difficulty walking, able only to shuffle around. However, she did not want to see a doctor. When finally she did consent to go, the doctor insisted that she go to the hospital. Tests revealed that she had had a stroke. She was finally discharged to Holy Family Center. She experienced difficulty breathing and needed oxygen. As her breathing became more labored, she was admitted to the hospital again. Renal failure, diabetes, a bleeding ulcer--all contributed to her death. She was first put on a ventilator and then a respirator. Gradually they weaned her from the respirator since it was not her wish to have any extraordinary means used. She lived about six days after its removal.



Sister M. Bernardice, MSC - Helen Cipar  
Born: February 22, 1921 in Carrollton, Pa.  
First Profession: August 26, 1940  
Died: December 1, 1992 in Reading, Pa.

After her first profession, Sister Bernardice served as a homemaker at St. Michael's and at Villa St. Elizabeth. Then, for a period of 29 years, she was a primary teacher in grades one and

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two. She taught at St. John's, Allentown and Revere; St. Michael's, Lansford; Our Lady of Hungary, Northampton; St. Henry's, Philadelphia; OLSH, Hilltown; Coopersburg; SS. Cyril and Methodius, Reading; Holy Guardian Angels, Reading. Because of poor health she had to leave teaching, which she loved. She then ministered in various ways at St. Michael's and Villa St. Elizabeth.

During the years that she worked with children, it was evident how much she loved them and they loved her. Her welcoming and gentle ways endeared her to them as well as to their parents. When Bernie was living at our novitiate house in Philadelphia, the children attending the day care center next door loved to see her come out. She would reach out to them with a warm smile, a hug, or a word. They knew she was their friend.

Gratitude was a striking characteristic of Bernardice. She thanked for everything and long remembered a kind deed done to her. How many times she thanked those who drove her to New Hampshire to see her sick brother.

During these past years when she lived at St. Michael's, she was a good community member because of her kind ways. She did many a favor and was always willing to help out when needed. Sister Bernardice told others that she was not afraid to die. She was ready at any time. We all knew she had poor health but did not expect that God would call her so soon.

On Friday, December 4, 1992, at 3:30 P.M., we shall celebrate the Mass of the Resurrection for Sister. She will then be laid to rest in our convent cemetery. We are truly grateful for the gracious life of Sister Bernardice.

United in the love of Jesus,

*Sister Teresita, MSC*

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