

Provincialate
1201 Museum Road
Reading, Pa. 19611
Phone: (215) 376-0138

July 19, 1988

"This is what Yahweh asks of you: only this, to act justly,
to love tenderly and to walk humbly with your God." (Mi 6:8)

Dear Sisters,

The first reading in today's Eucharistic Celebration seems to summarize the life of our dear Sister Gemma whom God called to her eternal reward today at 7:30 p.m.



Sister M. Gemma - Mary Augustine
Born: February 5, 1896
First Profession: November 21, 1915
Entered into eternal life: July 18, 1988

Sister Gemma was the first young woman to enter the aspirancy in the U.S. province. After novitiate, Sister was assigned to teaching in McAdoo, Lansford, Palmerton, Philadelphia, Nazareth, and Coplay. She taught the children not only secular knowledge, but led them to Jesus through word and personal example. Her students loved her very much. Sister Gemma also ministered in Limeport, Wellsburg, and Athens.

In 1969, arteriosclerosis set in, and after some time, cerebral arteriosclerosis forced Sister to retire from teaching. Steadily, her condition grew more severe, and for about the past ten years, Sister seemed to withdraw from the mainstream of life, rocking silently in her chair with eyes closed. Occasionally when she opened her eyes and smiled, one could see peace and joy in her face. Only God knows what went on in her beautiful soul between herself and Him.

Sister Gemma was a simple, loving, and compassionate person whose one aim was to be holy. Truly, she strove to act justly, love tenderly, and walk humbly with God! Her contemplative spirit expressed itself in art, as she captured the beauty of God's nature with her artistic talent. Life, its light and darkness, its open vastness and receding shadows, its movement in running waters proclaimed to her the message that God is everywhere. As her mental powers diminished, Sister witnessed to the fact that it wasn't the absence of sorrow and hardship that gives meaning to life, but rather the presence of her loving Lord. Sister Gemma's great devotion to Mary drew her daily more closely to the Heart of Jesus.

The Mass of the Resurrection will be offered on Thursday, July 21st at 11:00 a.m. Burial will follow in the convent cemetery. Let us continue to remember Sister Gemma with much love and gratitude in our prayers.

United in His Heart,

Sister Joanne
Sister Joanne