

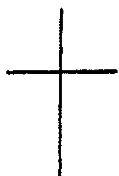
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February 8, 1994

"Let the little children come to me,
for they are at home in my Father's Kingdom."
(Antiphon from Evening Prayer)

Dear Sisters,

This evening around 10:30 P.M., God welcomed Sister Thoma into His Kingdom. She died peacefully, conscious to the end. Those who were with her knew where her heart was as she repeatedly looked with love at the crucifix. A few weeks ago, Sister Thoma said to a sister who was visiting her, "One of these days Jesus is coming for me. He'll say, 'Thoma, are you ready?' and I'll say, 'Yes, Thoma is ready!'" What a trust she had in God's love for her in spite of a tendency toward scrupulosity. Sister Thoma would have celebrated her 100th birthday in October, but God decided she was to enter the eternal celebration with Him and all of our sisters who have gone before her.



Sister M. Thoma - Mary Fichter
Born: October 25, 1894 in Bally, PA
First Profession: November 29, 1921
Died: February 8, 1994 in Reading, PA

Sister Thoma served in a variety of ministries during her 55 years of active ministry. Her first assignment was to care for children at St. Paul's Orphanage in Reading. Then she worked in the laundry at the Josephinum in Columbus, Ohio. For the next 46 years, she delighted those who were the recipients of her good meals. She worked in the kitchen at Our Lady of Good Counsel Seminary, staffed by the Augustinians, in Hamburg, New York; in the minor seminary of the Marianists in Beacon, New York; at the retreat house in Malvern, Pennsylvania; with the Marianists in Dayton, Ohio; with the MSC Fathers in Shelby, Ohio; in the home for the aged in Wellsburg, West Virginia; and finally at Incarnation School community in Palos Heights, Illinois. Throughout her life, Sister Thoma was noted for her kindness and her desire to do what she could to make others happy. She was an excellent cook and delighted to make her meals delicious and attractive. Sister retired to St. Michael's in 1977 and eventually joined Holy Family Center as her need for care increased.

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I could not find a more fitting quote in referring to the life of Sister Thoma than the one at the top of this letter. Her relationship with Jesus was that of a child to a father; a friend to a friend; a lover to a spouse. The childlike relationship that she had with Jesus is revealed in the following statements. When she looked at the host, she said, "Jesus, have a beautiful day, all day." After she fell, she called one of the sisters and said to her, "I want to thank Jesus that I didn't hurt myself." Another time when it was "confession day", she prayed, "Jesus, help us to make a good confession. Have mercy on us." Many a time Sister Thoma was found kneeling on the floor in front of her bed, praying the rosary.

Sister Thoma has left us a legacy of a childlike spirituality. We thank her for that and for all the years she served so lovingly as a homemaker.

The Mass of Resurrection will be celebrated for Sister on Friday, February 11, 1994, at 3:30 P.M. After that, she will be laid to rest in our convent cemetery.

United in the Heart of Jesus,

Sister Teresita, MSC