



We remember
Sister Beatrice Marie Costello, RSM
1914 - 2010

~ a Sister of Mercy for 75 years!

*Written and spoken by Jeanne Christensen, RSM
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Today we remember and rejoice in the life of Sister Beatrice Marie. In September we honored Sr. Bea on her 75th jubilee as a Sister of Mercy. What an extraordinary woman! We described her long, loving, generous service to God and all God's people. Of her jubilee she has said, "My jubilee day was a surprising day of realization of my impact on the lives of so many. The words of appreciation were humbling and somewhat surprising – to me it seems I have lived a very ordinary Mercy life" -- talk about a woman of humility!

Sister Bea might have considered her actions ordinary, but many were really extraordinary... she was an educator, she served as Secretary to the Mother General in Bethesda, MD for eleven years, and she served in Province leadership as Assistant Provincial in Omaha – where many of us affectionately called her Mother Bea. Sr. Bea also was Administrator of the Bishop Drumm Home when it was still on Clark Street and then oversaw its relocation to this present site. Not many of us serve in such responsible positions nor do we fulfill our ministries with the grace and generosity with which Sr. Bea did. When she retired as resident manager at McAuley Terrace, she moved to Omaha where she continued serving in the Regional archives and ministering at Mercy Villa. Her last ministry was one of prayer and presence with the sisters and residents here at Bishop Drumm. She was a very special woman with a heart filled with love and caring. She was sister, aunt, friend, colleague, cousin, mentor, and much more to each of us. She loved you her family, we her Sisters of Mercy, her friends, those with whom and to whom she ministered, and those of you who cared for her. She so enjoyed your visits, calls, cards, and letters. She loved talking with you.

She loved the Sisters of Mercy with all her heart and always said "yes" when the Sisters of Mercy asked.

"Yes" was also Sr. Bea's response when God asked. Her faith and her love of God were underpinned everything she said or did. The readings and songs today reflect that. We know she lived her understanding that God would provide all she needed and would not abandon her when things were difficult, that God would wipe away every tear. Her understanding was strengthened and nurtured when she received the Bread of Life at communion. In Sr. Bea's last days especially when her eyes failed her, she also found much peace and solace in praying the rosary. St. Paul spoke of what could separate us from the love of God and that we would overcome them all through God's love for us. Sr. Bea experienced God's love and knew that nothing could separate her from the love of God and this brought her contentment and joy.

And doesn't the song "Hail Mary, Gentle Woman" describe Sr. Bea perfectly? *Gentle Woman, quiet light, morning star, so strong and bright. Gentle Mother, peaceful dove, teach us wisdom; teach us love. You were chosen by the Father, you were chosen for the Son. You were chosen from all women and for woman, shining one. Blessed are you among women, blest in turn all women, too. Blessed they with peaceful spirits. Blessed they with gentle hearts.*

Sr. Bea -- gentle woman, quiet light, strong, chosen, blessed, peaceful. Last night when we were sharing stories, we all talked about what a special person she was. We named lots of attributes, but I wonder if what we really loved most about Sr. Bea was the reflection of God that we experienced in her? Let us stop and think about what one thing we really loved about Sr. Bea. If you could say only one word about her, what would it be?

Let us gather all these words and what you really love about Sr. Bea and hold it gently. This is her gift to us. "Let us go rejoicing to the house of the Lord."