

Sister M. Bernardine Kelly



755

Born: January 14, 1914
Parents: Francis and Anna (Reinke) Kelly
Entered from: St. Mary Parish - Borada, Nebraska
Postulancy: September 2, 1929
Novitiate: August 12, 1930
Profession: August 12, 1932
Died: Thursday, October 23, 1997 at Our Lady of Angels Retirement Home at 1:10 a.m.

Ministry:

1932 - 1951 St. Pascal, Chicago, IL, Grades 3, 5, 6
1951 - 1952 Sacred Heart, Englewood, IL, Grade 6
1952 - 1955 St. Francis de Sales, Toledo, OH, Grade 8
1955 - 1956 St. Francis Xavier, Chicago, IL, Grade 8
1956 - 1957 St. Mary, Des Plaines, IL, Grade 8
1957 - 1958 SS. Peter and Paul, Chicago, IL, Grade 8
1958 - 1962 Holy Family, Bayfield, WI, Superior/Principal, Grades 5-8
1962 - 1963 St. Peter, Mansfield, OH, Grade 8
1963 - 1968 Divine Savior, Chicago, IL, Grade 8
1968 - 1971 St. Francis de Sales, Chicago, IL, Grade 8
1971 - 1973 St. Stephen, Streator, IL, Grade 7
1973 - 1977 St. John, Joliet, IL, Grade 8
1977 - 1984 Divine Savior, Norridge, IL, Grade 8
1984 - 1991 St. Francis Convent, Joliet, IL, Substitute Teacher
1991 - 1997 St. Francis Convent, Joliet, IL, St. Francis Reading Center, Tutor
1997 - Our Lady of Angels Retirement Home, Joliet, IL, Retired

Wake: Our Lady of Angels, Joliet, IL, Sunday, October 26, 1997
2-7 p.m. with prayer service at 4:30 p.m.

Mass of Christian Burial: Our Lady of Angels, Joliet, IL
Sunday, October 26, 1997 at 7:00 p.m.

Burial: Monday, October 27, 1997 leaving Our Lady of Angels at 9:00 a.m.
to Resurrection Cemetery, Romeoville, IL, S8 - L339 - G9

Survived by: her sisters and brothers: Sister Marie Terese Kelly, osf;
Sister M. Alcuin Kelly, osf; Frances (Donald, deceased) Schwalbach
of Colwich, KS; Josephine (Ossie) Digani of Highwood, IL; John
(Charlette, deceased) Kelly of Council Bluffs, IA; William (Rita) Kelly
of Tacoma, WA; Rita (Albert) Johnson of Braidwood, IL; Jean (Bob)
Werner of White Bear, MN; Margaret (Donald) Abel of Lake Bluff, IL;
James (Joyce) Kelly of Omaha, NE and numerous nieces and nephews

*For those who have been faithful, O Lord,
life is not ended, but merely changed.*

Sister Bernardine Kelly was born in Arago, Nebraska on January 14, 1914 to Francis and Anna Kelly. Baptized at St. Mary's Parish, she was given the name Camilla, and was the first of 12 children in the Kelly family. She was followed by Marie Terese, Agnes (Sister Alcuin), Frances, Josephine, Rita, Jean, Margaret, and John, William and James, as well as a girl who died in infancy.

Already as a young girl, Camilla had a desire to become a sister. When she was 15 years old, following one year at St. Francis Preparatory School in Joliet, Camilla was received as a postulant by the Sisters of St. Francis. Entering the novitiate on August 12, 1930, Camilla received the name Sister Mary Bernardine. Two of her sisters, Sister Marie Terese (Orestes) and Sister Alcuin, also became Franciscan Sisters in Joliet.

Following her first profession of vows on August 12, 1932, Sister Bernardine began her educational ministry at St. Pascal Parish in Chicago and remained there until 1951. Sister Bernardine taught for more than 50 years, mainly in the Archdiocese of Chicago. Several of her many pupils became priests, including Francis George of St. Pascal's, now Archbishop of Chicago. With these priests and with other former pupils and friends, Sister Bernardine was an avid writer of letters. Whatever Sister Bernardine did, she did with energy, direction and enthusiasm. She taught lessons, prepared children for Confirmation, took them on field trips, supervised the student patrol, played baseball, cared about her pupils and prayed for them daily.

In 1984, Sister Bernardine moved to the Motherhouse in Joliet, where she continued her educational ministry as a substitute teacher and tutor. She volunteered time at the Housing Authority of Joliet, where she cared for the children of working mothers. Other time was spent reading, crocheting, watching baseball games, praying, preparing liturgies, taking care of the sacristy, writing letters and visiting with friends.

When cancer caused her to slow down, Sister Bernardine moved to Our Lady of Angels. Her sisters, Sister Marie Terese and Sister Alcuin, often visited with her, prayed with her, and during her final days kept vigil at her bedside, together with other Sisters from the Congregation. In the very early morning of October 23rd, as the Sisters prayed with her, Sister Bernardine gave her soul back to God.

Sister Bernardine, we thank you for the gift of your life. May you, who sought to teach as Jesus did, now learn from Jesus the Teacher. Continue to pray for all teachers and students, for all who care for others. May you shine forever as a star, as you are welcomed by the Risen Jesus to be with Him forever. Amen. Alleluia.

