



## *Sisters of St. Francis of Mary Immaculate*

On the late morning of October 9, 2017, our sister, Loretta, entered into the fullness of God's love and mercy. Having lived her life loving God and neighbor, with all her heart, being, strength, and mind, she returned to her Beloved One, who called her by name. Letting go of the treasured gift of life that she shared so lovingly and generously over the course of ninety years, she offered her ultimate response to the question set forth in the Gospel of the day: "Teacher, what must I do to inherit eternal life?" (Lk 10:25).

Born in Benton, Missouri, on June 17, 1927, Loretta Clara Vetter was the eldest of six children born to Alvina C. (Compas) and George Vetter. Growing up in St. Dionysius (St. Denis) Parish, she came to know the Sisters of St. Francis of Mary Immaculate at an early age. Moved by God's grace, she made her way as a young adolescent from the banks of the Mississippi River to the banks of the Des Plaines, where she became an aspirant with the Joliet Franciscans and attended St. Francis Academy.

On September 4, 1945, Loretta entered the postulancy. The following year, she was received into the novitiate on August 12, 1946, and given the name Sr. Mary Georgianne, a name that carried with it special significance as it also belonged to her youngest sister who died as an infant. On August 12, 1948, Sr. Georgianne professed her first vows and within a matter of days began the first of her elementary school teaching assignments.

By nature, she was an imaginative artist, a creative cook and a hospitable nurturer. Also, recognized as a promising administrator, Sr. Georgianne was called upon to serve—simultaneously—as a religious superior, parochial school principal and a junior high school teacher. With twenty-one years of experience in parochial schools and two degrees from the College of St. Francis and DePaul University respectively, Sr. Georgianne was well-positioned for the pathway on which she found herself. However, mindful of the changes brought about by the Second Vatican Council and the particular needs of increasing numbers of aging Sisters, another pathway for how she might best steward her gifts presented itself.

In the Fall of 1971, after completing a course of studies at the Institute of Gerontology at the University of Michigan, Sr. Loretta assumed a new position as Director of Retirement for the Sisters living at the Motherhouse. Attentive to the diverse needs, hopes, struggles and contributions of those moving into the third and fourth chapters of life, Sr. Loretta characterized her role as "shattering the silence" on aging. She firmly believed that

# *Alleluia!*



*Sister Loretta Vetter, OSF*

the liberation of elders was part of the process of seeking justice for all people of every age and ability. Over the course of the next six years, Sr. Loretta became an advocate for lifelong learning and human development across the lifespan, not only for the Franciscan sisters, but other elders as well.

In the years that followed, Sr. Loretta advanced the belief that calling forth others "to experience new growth" was part of God's design for building a future full of hope. Not only did she advance this belief, but she lived it out to the fullest in her own life, ministries and continuing education. During the next twenty-five years, from 1977 until 2002, she served as Sisters' Coordinator, the director of a center for vocational discernment, a pastoral associate, a certified hospital chaplain and a local coordinator at the Motherhouse. In the fifteen years that followed, from 2002-2017 she served as a parish secretary and receptionist as well as a volunteer and prayer sister for the Congregation. In each of these ministries, Sr. Loretta exemplified the best of Mother Alfred's spirit and the very heart of the charisms of Francis and Clare.

Throughout her life in community and ministry, Sr. Loretta remained attuned to the movements of the Spirit, the importance of relationships, and the dynamics of faith, hope, love and Franciscan joy – all of which made it possible for her to live amidst the vulnerability, fragility, brokenness and ambiguity of life, especially in troubled and uncertain times. She called the collective nature of these experiences "*living with a hole in one's heart which means accepting each perfect moment one-by-one and each painful moment one-at-a-time.*" As we give thanks to God for the life and legacy of our sister Loretta, may we continue to learn from her witness and wisdom today and in the days to come. Alleluia. Alleluia.

## *Sister Loretta Vetter, OSF*

*June 17, 1927—October 9, 2017*

<i>Born:</i>	June 17, 1927
<i>Parents:</i>	George Vetter and Alvina C. (Compas) Vetter
<i>Postulancy:</i>	September 4, 1946
<i>Novitiate:</i>	August 12, 1945
<i>First Profession:</i>	August 12, 1951
<i>Entered New Life:</i>	October 9, 2017

### **Ministry History**

1948-1949	Teacher, Grade 1: St. John, Joliet, Illinois
1949-1951	Teacher, Grades 3 and 4: St. Pascal, Chicago, Illinois
1951-1952	Full-time student: College of St. Francis, Joliet
1952-1958	Teacher, Grades 1, 2, 3, 4: St. Paul the Apostle, Joliet
1958-1962	Teacher, Grades 1 and 6: St. Rita, Aurora, Illinois
1962-1963	Teacher, Grade 6: Holy Family, Joliet
1963-1966	Teacher, Grade 7: St. Ann, Lansing, Illinois
1966-1967	Superior/Principal, Grades 7 and 8: St. Francis de Sales, Toledo, Ohio
1967-1970	Superior/Principal, Grades 7 and 8: St. Michael, Sigel, Illinois
1970-1971	Student: Institute of Gerontology, University of Michigan, Ann Arbor
1971-1977	Director of Retirement: St. Francis Convent (Motherhouse), Joliet
1977-1983	Sisters Coordinator: St. Francis Academy, Joliet
1983-1988	Director: House of Vocation Discernment, Cape Girardeau, Missouri
1988-1991	Pastoral Associate: St. Mary/Thayer Missions, West Plains, Missouri
1991-1999	Chaplain/Pastoral Care: St. John Hospital, Springfield, Illinois
1999-2002	Local Coordinator: Motherhouse, Joliet
2002-2005	Secretary: St. Patrick Parish, Joliet
2005-2009	Receptionist: St. Patrick Parish, Joliet
2009-2016	Volunteer Ministry: Congregation/Community/OLA Village
2016-2017	Community Service: Our Lady of Angels, Joliet

<i>Wake:</i>	Monday, October 16, 2017, 2:00-6:45 p.m., Our Lady of Angels, Joliet
<i>Prayer Service:</i>	Monday, October 16, 2017, 4:45 p.m., Our Lady of Angels, Joliet
<i>Mass of Christian Burial:</i>	Monday, October 16, 2017, 7:00 p.m., Our Lady of Angels, Joliet
<i>Burial:</i>	Tuesday, October 17, 2017, leaving Our Lady of Angels at 9:00 a.m. to Resurrection Cemetery, Romeoville, Illinois
<i>Interment:</i>	Section 8, Lot 343, Grave 2, Resurrection Cemetery
<i>Predeceased by:</i>	By her parents, George Vetter and Alvina C. (Compas) Vetter, her brother Vernon Vetter and sister Georgianne Vetter, her sister-in-law Neva Jean Vetter and brother-in-law Thomas Drury
<i>Survived by:</i>	Her brother Alfred Vetter (Benton, Missouri), sisters, Rita Drury (Scott City, Missouri) and Mary Francis (Robert) Todt (Oran, Missouri), and sister-in-law Janet Vetter (Benton, Missouri)

*Rest in Peace, Sister Loretta!*