

Sister Dolores Emge, C.PP.S.

Born: April 5, 1931

Professed: August 10, 1951

Entered into Life: August 21, 2016

Verse on her memorial card:

“The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he has anointed me to bring glad tidings to the poor... and to the prisoners.” (Luke 18:1)



August 23, 2016

Dear Sisters,

Around 1:00 a.m. on Sunday, August 21, our Sister Dolores Emge left this life and slipped quietly into the loving arms of God. She now is assured of the truth of the words that she chose for the first reading of her funeral liturgy: “I am certain that neither death nor life . . . neither height nor depth nor any other creature will be able to separate us from the love of God.” (Romans 8: 38-39)

Born on April 5, 1931, in St. Paul, Missouri, Sister Dolores was the fourth of the eight children of Regina and Oscar Emge. Three days later she was baptized in the St. Paul parish church. She entered our community in September 1948 and professed vows in 1951. Her novitiate classmates and those who lived with her in local community describe her as fun-loving with a wonderful, and sometimes mischievous, sense of humor. Her love of life and love of her Lord both ran deep. On August 10 of this year, she completed sixty-five years as a Sister of the Most Precious Blood.

Sister Dolores received a Bachelor of Science degree in English and a minor in Philosophy and Latin from St. Louis University in 1964. In 1990, she graduated from Loyola University with a master’s degree in Pastoral Studies.

Sister Dolores served as an elementary teacher at St. Monica and St. George in St. Louis, Holy Rosary in Warrenton, St. Maurus in Biehle, and St. Joseph in Des Moines, IA; as a teaching elementary principal at Our Lady of Fatima in Florissant; and a secondary teacher at St. Elizabeth Academy and St. John the Baptist in St. Louis. While principal at Our Lady of Fatima School, junior Sisters were often sent to hone their teaching skills under her tutelage. She was an excellent mentor to them, following up with them even after they were assigned to other schools.

Despite her success as a teacher, another call beckoned her. A love for the poor tugged at Sister Dolores’ heart, and she asked to serve in Bolivia. When her request originally was denied, she designed stationery with an outline map of South America. She vowed to write all of her letters to Mother Lorenza on this stationery until her request would be granted. Her persistence paid off, and she enjoyed ten years in La Paz and Cochabamba, Bolivia. There she was instrumental in establishing base communities, working with families to build and strengthen their faith. In order to be near the people, Sister Dolores found a “nice house” in Maria Reina parish -- one room with bunk

beds, a small table and two chairs, no heat and outdoor bathroom facilities shared with the neighbors. She and Sister Doris Rechiene shared this small space for two years until the parish built a larger house.

Her years in Bolivia were perhaps the happiest of her life as she gave herself tirelessly to her ministry. In recent years, even as her health declined, a visit from anyone who spoke Spanish would bring a light to her eyes and a smile to her face.

After returning from Bolivia, Sister Dolores found great joy in service to the immigrant poor through the Catholic Hispanic Center in the Archdiocese of St. Louis. In 1981 she wrote to Archbishop May saying, "Until four weeks ago I wanted very badly to return to Bolivia and I prayed to know God's will. He slowly, and gently, made me aware of a great need here in St. Louis. He continued to bring Spanish-speaking people in need across my path. Finally, I admitted that he was speaking to me. (He almost had to shout!) I am now aware of the 145,000 Hispanics in the St. Louis area . . . if we don't help these people now, we'll lose them to the Church." And help them she did, first as staff and then as Director of the Center. When she left that ministry Archbishop May wrote, "I wish to express my thanks to you in my own name and in the name of the Church of St. Louis . . . You contributed much to the development of this important ministry in our Archdiocese, and you were willing to accept the position of director when the Hispanic community needed your talents. You will be missed."

Indeed, Sister Dolores will be missed by many, especially her family. She is survived by her brothers Dennis and his wife Alice, Robert and his wife Judy, and her sisters Lucille, Charlotte and her husband William, her sister-in-law Jacqueline, and many cousins, nieces, and nephews.

Sister's body will return to St. Joseph Chapel at 3:30 p.m. on Thursday, August 25, 2016, and her wake will be from 3:30 - 8 p.m., with a Prayer Service of Thanksgiving at 7 p.m. Her wake will continue on Friday, August 26, 2016, from 9 - 10:45 a.m. with her Funeral Mass at 11 a.m., all in St. Joseph Chapel.

In recent years Sister Dolores struggled with a number of chronic health issues and was no longer able to be the energetic and lively person of her earlier years. A song she chose for her funeral liturgy hints that, despite these health challenges, she never lost her sense of hope. "Remember in the winter, far beneath the bitter snow, lies the seed that in the sun's love, in the spring becomes the rose." (*The Rose*, sung by Bette Midler) Sister Dolores, we rejoice with you, that you now are blooming in the Son's love.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Sr. Janice".

Sister Janice Bader, CPPS