



Sr. Jean Marie Macy -- Angela of the Eucharist
May 12, 1917 - December 5, 2004

Sister Jean Marie Macy was born in Chicago, Illinois on May 12, 1917, the fourth of six children born into this happy, close-knit family. Her mother, Mary, was one of those confirmed readers who even at breakfast would read the back of the cereal box. Jean's father, George, was an electrical engineer who excelled particularly in math, often rescuing his children from unsolved homework problems.

After completing her studies at Loretto Academy, Jean entered the Carmel of Indianapolis on November 24, 1935 and the following year received the Habit and the name, Angela of the Eucharist. Due to an unfounded anxiety about Jean's health, four days later the prioress sent her home. The next prioress wrote and apologized asking if Jean would like to reenter. Typical of her kind and forgiving nature, Jean wrote that she understood the situation and shared how Mother Hilda would come to the kitchen when Jean was cooking and help in little ways to get the nuns' dinner out on time... on-time-ness being a problem for Jean who wrote in this same letter, "You know how slow I am."

Deciding that the dream she carried from childhood to be a nun was finished, Jean applied for and received a position as a long distance operator at Bell Telephone. Sharing her father's ability at math, a science in which her mother also excelled, Jean at this same time enrolled in night school to become a CPA.

The invitation from Mother Agnes and the Indianapolis community to return to Carmel changed this plan and Jean's letters, the few we have, are filled with joy at that thought of once again being in Carmel. She entered for the second time on June 11, 1940 and for a second time became Sister Angela of the Eucharist, years later returning to her baptismal name of Jean.

Skilled in both hand and Necchi machine needlework, Sister was sent immediately to help in the vestment department where with one or two other sisters she produced the elaborate chasubles, dalmatics, stoles and even miters designed by Sister Anne Clem for local and non-local clergy. Besides this work, over the years sister was sacristan and in charge of various departments in the monastery. Her temperament was a gentle one, calm and peaceful, at times too peaceful for the work needing to be done which led to many a reprimand not to be so slow, all of which Sister peacefully heard.

Over the next years, Sister Angela served as council sister, novice mistress, sub prioress and prioress. During her term as prioress, Patrick Flood contacted the nuns with the news that Bishop Robert Dwyer was seeking a Carmel willing to make a foundation in his diocese of Reno, Nevada. Sister Angela, the council and community prayed over, talked over and thought over the idea and decided it was God's work.

Sister Angela was particularly taken with the idea of the foundation. She and Sister Anne Clem made several trips to Reno and with the help of friends located a house on Virginia Street, not far from the University. On August 24, 1954 eight sisters, with Sister Angela as prioress and Sister Anne as sub-prioress, left for Reno.

Once the community was settled in Sister Angela used her skills to create beautiful vestments and help with the bookkeeping, while other sisters learned the art of printing Christmas and all occasion cards to support the new foundation. Everyone had a job! The chanted Office of the Hours and daily Mass, a vital part of Carmelite community life, was a special joy for Angela as she loved to sing. On the form we keep on file with each sister's wishes or special requests for her funeral, regarding Mass Sister Angela, now known as Sister Jean, wrote, "Just so it's sung for the most part." For the next fifty years of her life, most of which were lived in our present monastery located high on a hill overlooking the city of Reno, Jean faithfully lived out her life of prayer and service to our community and to the local and world-wide Church.

In her eighties, she developed congestive heart failure that gradually worsened to where, at the beginning of this year's Advent, she could no longer leave her bed. Our nurse, Sister Mary, and Sister Carol were the main caregivers along with the rest of community who did all that we could. The devoted help of a former member, Peggy McKnight, also a nurse, was a special blessing.

In her last days, Jean remained her own gentle, peaceful self, never losing her warm and welcoming smile and so grateful for any little service offered. As the decades moved on, often she was not the sower but "She was sunshine to the harvest."