



Sister Alberta
of the Blessed
Sacrament, O.C.D.
(Alberta Ethel Grimm)

Born April 21, 1919 - Solemn Profession May 11, 1942 - Entered into Life September 6, 2010

Sister lived 73 years in Carmel, 38 years in the Carmel of St. Teresa and St. John of the Cross in Wheeling, West Virginia; in the merger with the Carmel of the Sacred Heart and of the Holy Face in Elysburg, Pennsylvania for 33 years and again moved with her Community to Maria Hall in Danville, Pennsylvania where she lived for 21/2 years.

Through Jesus, with Jesus, in Jesus
in the unity of the Holy Spirit, all
glory and honor is yours, Almighty
Father forever and ever.
Amen!



Reflections on the life of Sister Alberta

Praying over and reflecting on what one might say in a short statement about a life of 94 years of age, 21 years of which were spent in a loving, nurturing family home, 38 years of which were in the Monastery of Saint Teresa and Saint John of the Cross in Wheeling, West Virginia, 33 in the Monastery of the Sacred Heart and of the Holy Face in Elysburg and almost three years with her community here in Maria Hall, the endeavor appeared challenging. An added challenge was that of weaving the two experiences in Carmel, that of the observance lived exactly as it was in the 16th century by Saint Teresa and then after Vatican Council II the slow, thoughtful, reflected transition to the needs of our modern times. How to proceed, what to say? Then in the silence a word came interiorly, perhaps from Sr. Alberta, “speak about Jesus, not about me.”

Sr. Alberta spoke easily and familiarly about Jesus. Reared in a strong German Catholic family in Peoria, Illinois, the middle child with a twin brother Albert, she learned to pray and learned to love life

from her parents. At the birth of Alberta and Albert, Mr. Grimm, a baker, with generosity and creativity decided to treat his customers with small, twin loaves of bread. Grace before and after meals was never omitted; and frequently the three young daughters were told: "Please go do the dishes, your mother has worked hard making us this good meal."

The first to leave home was Richard who became a Holy Cross priest at Notre Dame in South Bend. He always remained big brother to Sr. Alberta.

At age 18, Alberta knew she wanted to become a Carmelite nun. Prayer was her drawing and a life given to prayer for the Church and the world was her vocation. She once said she entered Carmel "to thank and praise God for those who do not thank and praise Him." When she asked permission of her father, his reply was "Wait until you are 21, then you can do what you wish." That she did, enrolling in St. Mary's College of Notre Dame. There she studied hard and also engaged in many sports basketball, soccer, golf, softball, tennis, swimming and the one she loved to describe to us - the broad jump, starting with a rapid run, leaping over the formation of fellow students, always ending with a perfect landing.

College filled two years of the time until age 21, and the third year she chose to spend at home with her family whom she would leave to enter Carmel.

In Wheeling Carmel Sister Alberta served as

novice mistress and as prioress for three terms; the Sisters felt her kindness: kind was the word very often used when friends spoke of her. Likewise, she was very attentive to the human and spiritual needs of the Sisters in the life which was demanding with the silence, solitude and penance. The work, however, which was Alberta's first love was the care of the sick; she had a great compassion, gentleness and sensitivity to their pain. She served in the infirmary for decades up until the time when she herself needed care.

At Elysburg Carmel Alberta shared the fruit of her prayer life in assisting the Secular Order of Discalced Carmelites; she did this over a span of twenty years, regularly giving talks to the group on prayer, the Carmelite charism and its saints; individually directing many in contemplative prayer, how to speak familiarly and intimately with Jesus and with Mary, reflecting on how they might live their promises and vows in daily family and professional life. She has a deep devotion to the Blessed Virgin Mary, calling her in prayer, Mother.

In the vulnerability and simplicity that advancing age often brings, some of the hidden beauty of Alberta's spirit and prayerfulness shone out. Each day, every day at the Office, either morning or evening prayer, or both she prayed: "For those who are away from the Sacraments that they may find their way back and give Jesus that great joy."

During a period when we had a few days of relaxation from the schedule, someone asked her what she would find refreshing and relaxing: "Just

to rest for a while before the Blessed Sacrament.”

Two days before God called her, with help from a nurse, she was having a bit of pureed soup, but her mind and heart were occupied elsewhere. With no word as a prelude, in her soft voice, she began: “I, Sister Alberta of the Blessed Sacrament renew my profession and I promise poverty, chastity and obedience to God, to the blessed Virgin Mary of Mount Carmel, to my prioress and her successors according to the Primitive Rule of Discalced Carmelites and our Constitutions.”

You will notice the quote on her memorial card: Through Jesus, with Jesus, in Jesus in the unity of the Holy Spirit, all glory and honor is yours, Almighty Father forever and ever ... the Amen was in the giving of her life. In conclusion, I offer this brief verse by our Sr. Margaret:

Alberta, your Great Amen has been your
life. It has gone soaring through the world
of stars
and the world of souls.
And now with Jesus you hear it resound
and you laugh to hear
the echoes of your own voice,
filling all creation with love and praise.
Bring our voices in, Alberta,
and with you we say, loud and clear
Amen!!

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Photos

In joyful remembrance of Sister Alberta
of the Blessed Sacrament, O.C.D.



2010



2009



1996