

MARIAN RESIDENCE

1104 Toluca Avenue
ALLIANCE, NEBRASKA 69301

March 23, 1983

Dear Sisters and Friends,

On the eve of St. Joseph's feast, March 18, at 7:25 p.m., Sister Wendelin Kockler died at the Sisters' Care Residence, Alliance, Nebraska.

Elizabeth Kockler was born in St. Wendel, Saar, Germany, in 1898. She had two brothers and two sisters. In 1924, after having experienced the horrors of war as a young woman, Elizabeth entered our community. The following year she received the habit and the name of Sister Wendelin, in honor of the city of her birth.

She was still a novice when she came to the United States "as a missionary". On July 2, 1926, she made her profession of vows at Stella Niagara, New York. Her early years in this country were spent at Stella Niagara and Columbus, Ohio. She became a registered x-ray technician in Minot, North Dakota, in 1947. She then worked in our hospitals in Scottsbluff, Alliance, and O'Neill, Nebraska.

Sister Wendelin loved to travel and took every opportunity to do so. She returned to her native land several times, and had visits from a niece and nephew from Germany and a priest-cousin, Father Ciarin Dillon, O.M.I. He is the son of a cousin who went to Ireland and married there.

In 1973 Sister Wendelin returned once more to Alliance, to retire. As her health failed, Sister prepared for her meeting with her God by many hours of prayer in the presence of the Blessed Sacrament. She sent a treasured relic of St. Wendel to a Franciscan church in Catacauqua, Pennsylvania, which was named in his honor. A habit, scapular, and cord hung in her closet, with instructions for her burial.

It is difficult to recapture those precious moments when a faithful servant returns to God. On February 28 Sister's condition, which had been declining for several years, grew worse. Even though she was placed on continuous oxygen, she herself did not feel that death was imminent. During these days she was an outstanding example of patience and the acceptance of "whatever God wills". On March 16, we were certain death would come soon; for the next forty-eight hours Sisters were continuously at her bedside in prayer, alone or in groups. While she breathed her last the twenty-second Chapter of Revelations was read. Her parents and one sister were awaiting her in heaven.

The theme of her funeral Mass on March 22 centered around "the Life-Giving Waters" and the faith and trust needed to "leave home and go far away to another land". The Mass was concelebrated by Father Ciarin Dillon, O.M.I. from Seattle, Washington; Father Francis Curran and Father Michael Richards, in St. Joseph Gerontology Center chapel. Sisters from Denver, Colorado; Alliance, Gering, Harrison, O'Neill, and Chadron, Nebraska, were present. Sisters served as pallbearers and carried the traditional candles. She was laid to rest in Calvary Cemetery. May her soul rest in peace.

Peace and All Good,

The Sisters at Marian Residence