

# MARIAN RESIDENCE

1104 Toluca Avenue  
ALLIANCE, NEBRASKA 69301

April 28, 1983

Dear Sisters and Friends,

Sister Claire Connelly, age 93, a resident of St. Joseph Gerontology Center, died in Box Butte General Hospital on Saturday afternoon, April 23.

Marie Claire Connelly was born in Baltimore, Maryland, February 3, 1890. She was the oldest of nine children; two brothers and two sisters survive in California. Her father, Thomas Connelly was a newspaper editor and publisher. In 1908 he moved his large family to Sacramento, California, where he began the publication of the Catholic Herald. His daughter's flare for writing was developed as she assisted in the publication of the paper. The Herald, which was sold to the Diocese of Sacramento in 1932, celebrated its seventy-fifth anniversary in March of this year.

Marie Claire entered the Sisters of St. Francis at Stella Niagara, New York, in 1924. After her profession of vows she entered a nursing school, completing her training in 1928 at St. Joseph's Hospital, Minot, North Dakota. In 1938 she became a registered nurse anesthetist. She worked in hospitals in North Dakota, Ohio, and Montana, as well as Alliance and Scottsbluff, Nebraska, until her retirement from nursing in 1952.

A severe illness brought Sister Claire from Marycrest, Denver, Colorado, to St. Joseph's, Alliance in January, 1980. She lived for awhile at Marian Residence, but moved back to St. Joseph Gerontology Center in November, 1981, because of illness.

Sister Clare's health continued to decline until she fell the evening of March 22. She was taken to Box Butte General Hospital, where x-rays showed a broken hip. The Sisters were with her most of the time until her death at 3:00 p.m. on March 23. At the moment of her death Sister Raineldis was praying at her bedside; they had spent many years together at Marycrest.

Sister Claire's body was returned to St. Joseph's chapel at 5:00 p.m. on April 25, while the Sisters recited the Office of the Dead. The Rosary was recited at 7:00 p.m., and the funeral Mass was offered by our pastor, Father Francis Curran at 10:00 a.m., April 26. Father Curran captured the theme of the Mass and Sister Claire's life well in his homily. He said, "Sister Claire knew the Lord, heard his voice, and followed Him"... "He loved her as she was and He loves us as we are"... "She learned in more than nine decades that we do not save ourselves but came to understand we have been saved by the Lord Jesus."

Sister Annette and Bob Mains escorted her body to Denver, where a second prayer service was held Tuesday evening and a second funeral Mass was offered Wednesday morning at Marycrest. In accordance with her request, she was buried in Mount Olivet Cemetery, Denver, Colorado.

May the same God who accompanied Sister Claire to eternal life continue to help us on our journey.

The Sisters at Marian Residence