

MARIAN RESIDENCE

1104 Toluca Avenue
ALLIANCE, NEBRASKA 69301

June 25, 1986

Dear Sisters, Relatives, and Friends:

For the second time this month, the Angel of Death came to Marian Residence early on a Sunday morning. Sr. Margarita Fields, suffering from Alzheimer's Disease, had been failing for some time; her condition became critical on Thursday, June 19. Her family was notified; on Saturday, her brother Manuel arrived from New Mexico, with his daughter, Mary Ann Marsh, and her husband, Tom. A cousin, Madge Munoz, accompanied them from Mitchell, Nebraska. Sr. Flores Marquez came from Denver at almost the same time. They joined the Sisters who had been watching at Sr. Margarita's bedside, especially Sr. Carmelita Telles, who is also a native of Tularosa and a distant relative of the family. Sister Margarita lingered through the night; at 7:02 in the morning, while Mass was being offered in the chapel above, her condition changed suddenly and she went home to God.

Margarita Fields, the seventh child of Reney and Mariana Fields, was born in Tularosa, New Mexico, February of 1914. She entered the Sisters of St. Francis at Stella Niagara in August, 1933, was given the name of Sister Ferdinand (she later returned to her baptismal name), and made her vows in 1935. That same year, she began her apostolate of approximately 35 years as an elementary teacher. Though she taught in several states, she considered the three years she spent at St. Francis International School in Rome as the highlight of her career. She worked for a few years in parish ministry in Scottsbluff, Nebraska, before retiring to Marian Residence in Alliance in 1982. When she needed nursing care, she was moved to the Sisters' Unit of St. Joseph Gerontology Center.

When the Sisters gathered for Sr. Margarita's funeral, the memories most often repeated were those of the happiness she added to community life by her unflinching sense of humor. She loved to tell jokes and play little tricks on others, but never in a way that hurt anyone. Father Dan Christenson, in his homily at the Mass of the Resurrection, remarked that the first reading from the Song of Songs was most fitting; Sister Margarita's heart was filled with joy, which was evident to all around her. Even in her last days, when she was no longer able to speak, she had a smile for all who paused to greet her.

The funeral Mass was offered in the chapel of St. Joseph Gerontology Center at 10 a.m. on June 24. Sisters came from Denver, Colorado; O'Neill and Gering, Nebraska; and Holy Rosary Mission and Manderson, South Dakota, for the services. Agnes Kunzman led the singing, accompanied by two of our novices on guitars. Under the direction of Sr. Flores, we had learned a simple Spanish hymn, and sang it after Communion. We then laid her to rest with the eighty-three other Franciscans in Calvary Cemetery. Besides her brother Manuel one sister, Susan, and several nieces and nephews survive her.

May her soul live in peace.

Sisters of Marian Residence