

MARIAN RESIDENCE

1104 Toluca Avenue
ALLIANCE, NEBRASKA 69301
(308) 762-4408

July 26, 2002

Dear Sisters, Family Members and Friends,

The Angel of Death hovered closely for some weeks near room #218 at Marian Residence where Sister Borromea Befit had lived since her transfer from St. Joseph's Gerontology Center to Marian Residence in 1987. On the Feast of Mother Magdalen, July 22, 2002, with Sisters and Staff members praying for her, Sister Borromea went home to her God.

Anna Elizabeth Befit was born on May 18, 1912 in Odessa, Russia to Martin Befit and Barbara Meyer Befit. When Anna and her sister, Blanche, were still small the family left Russia and came to the United States and settled in North Dakota. Upon arrival in the United States, the immigration authorities mis-spelled the name Binfit as Befit. Several years later the family members officially changed their name to Benfit. However, Sister Borromea kept the name Befit. Sister Borromea's brother Mike was born after they arrived at Napoleon, ND. While the three children were small, Martin Befit was killed in a farm accident and in time Barbara married Michael Leir, a widower with four living children. To this new union five children were born.

Anna Befit did domestic work in Minot, North Dakota before entering the convent in Stella Niagara, New York on December 27, 1931. On August 18, 1933 Sister Borromea became a Professed Sister of St. Francis of Penance and Christian Charity. Her active ministries were in New York, Ohio, North Dakota, South Dakota, Colorado and Nebraska. When Marycrest opened one area on the second floor to a nine-room well-elderly facility for ladies, Sister Borromea was the first one to be in charge of them. She was also very active in the prayer groups that were held at Marycrest. There was a time when almost 200 people came for this Wednesday evening prayer meeting.

In March of 1986, Sister Borromea had major cancer surgery and came to St. Joseph's Gerontology Center and then to Marian Residence for care. During the last fifteen years Sister was active around the convent and was in reasonably good health. The last few months she complained about heaviness in her chest, back and legs but no specific cause could be found. On June 10, 2002 her pulse became very slow and the tests revealed severe heart damage. When there was no improvement with changes in medications we (and Sister Borromea) realized death would come soon. Hospice cared for her and the medications made her last weeks relatively pain free. The nursing staff gave her exceptionally good care and many Sisters and friends prayed with and for her. During her last several days Sisters from Alliance offered many prayers at her bed side, the priests stopped frequently and when she could not swallow the Host but was aware we gave her a few drops of the Precious Blood.