

**MARIAN RESIDENCE  
ALLIANCE, NE  
February 2009**

**Dear Sisters, Associates and Relatives of Sister Leonita Hager OSF**

**On January 4, 1909 Regina, the two week old daughter of Anton and Magdalen Kraft Hager, was baptized at the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary Catholic Church in Strassburg, ND. By the water and those words she was given the *title* Christian and called to be priest, prophet and king. A few years and several moves later the Hager family lived in Minot, ND. During those years Regina learned to speak English and not just German.**

**This young Christian graduated from Minot, Public High School in June of 1928. In March of 1929 Regina who had been born on a homestead in Anamose, ND made the long trip ( in her words "almost around the world") to the novitiate in Stella Niagara, NY. On August 12, 1929 she received another *title* "Sister" and the name Leonita. This *title* called her to be a Sister of St. Francis of Penance and Christian Charity. From the memories shared at her wake on February 10<sup>th</sup> it was so evident that Sister Leonita had been faithful to those *titles* and the name by which Jesus called her. She remembered that her name had been carved in the palm of His hand. In 1931 she professed temporary Vows and in 1935 made Perpetual Vows.**

**As a senior novice she began a long and varied teaching career. She taught across the United States; Ohio, New York, Washington, Montana, the Indian Missions of SD and both O'Neill and Alliance, Nebraska. During all those years and all those places she responded to her *titles* with patience, peaceful surrender and a winning smile. In 1988, after fifty-eight years of teaching, she moved to Marian Residence and this busy, retired Sister kept "the books". Sister received a BA from St. Ambrose, Davenport, Iowa and a MA in Education from Creighton in Omaha. She had credits from various other colleges and universities.**

**In the fall of 2008 St. Agnes Academy, Alliance, NE celebrated one hundred years. In December Sister Leonita celebrated her hundred birthday. Many students fondly remember her as their teacher and she fondly remembered many students. We are not certain but it seems as if St. Agnes Academy held a very special place in her heart.**

**Sister Helena Hager OSF, her blood sister, nieces and nephew are her survivors. Her parents, five brothers and three sisters preceded her in death.**

**Until a few months ago Sister sorted and delivered the mail at Marian, neatly printed the schedule for the next day on the white boards and had several other duties. Only a few days before her death she was moved to second floor and had the services of Hospice. Her death, on February 6<sup>th</sup>, was peaceful as her life had been.**

**Her niece Theresa Hager and friend Cheryl Johnson were at Sister Helena's side at the wake, at the Mass of Christian Burial and for the final Alleluia as Sisters from Denver, Manderson, Valentine, Omaha and O'Neill blessed the casket with water that called her to be Christian. She was laid to rest beside 122 Sisters many with whom she had worked and lived. Father James Heithoff was principal celebrant for the Mass on February 11th Fathers Ed Cortney, Bryan Ernest and Tim Stoner were also present at the wake or Mass.**

**The Sisters of St. Francis of Penance and Christian Charity at Marian Residence**