

Remembering Loretta Vogt
1927 - 2022



*“our oneness in Christ extends
beyond this life,
the bond of community
unites us even after death”
(Const. #59/d.31)*

On June 6, 2022 Sister Loretta Vogt's earthly journey ended peacefully and she entered the fullness of life. Formerly Sister Ignatia of the Sacred Heart, Loretta was born in Odessa, Saskatchewan, the daughter of Vincent Vogt and Katherine Biegler. She was the second youngest of seven, the sister of Katherine (Kay), Mary Margaret, William, George, Henry and Alfred, all of whom predeceased her.

Loretta's early days in Odessa were strongly influenced by her family and her education from the Vibank Ursulines including Sisters Ursula Righetti, Catherine Wekel, Cecilia Huck and Teresita Leboldus. She entered the Ursuline Sisters in Vibank, Saskatchewan on November 14, 1944. After teacher training in Moose Jaw she began teaching at the elementary level in Vibank.

Another significant change occurred in her life when the Ursulines of Vibank amalgamated with the Ursulines of the Chatham Union in December 1953. Both groups were enriched by this joining and at the same time, faced challenges and changes.

In the course of her ministry, Loretta served in Saskatchewan, Alberta and Ontario as a teacher, principal and local leader. She worked with a variety of people in a time of growth and expansion.

During these years she experienced troubling medical symptoms and was finally diagnosed with Multiple Sclerosis in January 1968. Her medical situation led to a move to the infirmary at The Pines in Chatham where she underwent an assortment of treatments and eventually experienced a remission.

In Chatham, Sister Loretta was involved in administrative work and became connected with the Multiple Sclerosis Chapter where her efforts were untiring over the next fifty years. Up to quite recently she regularly scanned the local obituaries to identify any members of the MS family who had died and then informed the president so that suitable condolences could be sent. In an article in the local paper about the MS society she was quoted as saying "Feed your spirit. Feed your strength." This is an axiom that she herself took to heart as she deepened her own relationships with God and those people in her life. It was characteristic of her to maintain faithful and regular connections with Sisters who lived at a distance and to express her gratitude to others for their contributions to Ursuline life. She provided a listening ear and a compassionate presence to the members of her MS family and a lively interest in and participation in community life.

Ursulines were able to gather in the kiva at St. Angela's Meadow Retirement Lodge to celebrate the life of Sister Loretta. In recognition of Loretta's many connections, Sister Sheila McKinley, who led the prayers, invited those assembled to 'widen their tents' to include all the sisters, friends and family members who could not be physically present. The readings which Loretta chose reflected her deepest values. Isaiah's words were reminders of God's call and faithfulness: I have called you by name; you are mine. The gospel message from Luke outlined the specifics of the call: to be compassionate, forgiving and giving. Surely now Loretta is experiencing the overflowing of God's generosity.

With great joy the Mass of Resurrection was celebrated in the kiva and the rafters rang with music as Cindy Waddick accompanied and led the singing. During these many, many months of Covid 19 restrictions singing and musical accompaniment have been largely missing. It was a great blessing to be able to gather to give thanks for Loretta's life lived so generously and courageously. We were even able to include pall bearers in the service: David Denomy, John Racz, Beth Fox, Jean Earley, Pat Weiler and Al Johns.

Now thank we all our God, with hearts and hands and voices – for a life lived with grace and passion. May Sister Loretta feast now on the fullness of God.