

Sister Florence Davy, BVM (Florencita)
Wake Stories/Reflections
Marian Hall Chapel, Feb. 11, 2014

Sister Anne Buckley, BVM (St. Edwin)

The thing I'll always remember about Florence is during the time when she was upstairs on fourth floor. Even though she had so much to contend with and so much loss, whenever I would go up to her and speak to her, though I might not understand exactly what she was saying, she would always give me a big smile and she held my hand tight, no matter how much her life was challenging her.

Diane Davy, Sister-in-law

Just looking back on the memories, when we were married 53 years ago, she was not allowed to be at the wedding. That was a time when sisters could not go out to social events, I believe. Soon after that she became such a valuable member of our family. She was always there on special occasions for our children and for the grandchildren eventually. She was there to celebrate with us. She was a very dear, dear part of our family; we love her very dearly.

Jim Davy, Nephew

I also remember the wonderful times when she spent time with our family. Many Christmas Eves she would be over at our house spending time with us. What a wonderful person she was—humble, great to be around, always nice and fun. At my wedding, she and I shared a dance. It was a modern song called “Love Shack.” It wasn't really her kind of music, but she was out there laughing about it. My kids are college age now, but when they were young, she loved to be around them and they enjoyed being around her. She was so great with the kids. We have some wonderful memories. We love her and we miss her.

Jim Davy, Brother

I was thinking last night while looking back that one of her attributes that she passed on to me and hopefully to other people is her kindness. Kindness is everything. If you are kind, you do a lot of good things. Sister was kind to everybody. I still remember that. I was just reminded of a little story. Diane had not met Sister yet because she was spending the summer in the Des Moines area. So we drove over from Chicago on a Sunday and went up to the convent and saw Sister Florence. I was requested by the members of the convent to go back to Illinois and pick up a case of beer because all of the liquor stores in Iowa were closed on Sunday. So I went back across the Mississippi to pick up a case of beer for the convent. That was the first time that Diane met Sis.

Sister Joanne Simonini, BVM (Lisbeth)

When I was professed in 1954 and went to St. Aloysius in Kansas City, Florence, then named Florencita, was one of four sisters who welcomed me. They were quite young and so was I. There were just the five of us in the house. I remember Florence as a very kind, gentle, happy welcoming person. Of the four, she was the last one living. We reconnected when I came to live in Dubuque last year. I have happy, pleasant memories of her as a very gentle, kind, loving person.

Sister Jane Haslwanter, BVM (Janette)

I knew Florence early on when I was teaching in Chicago at St. Ferdinand and Florence was teaching sewing and home economics at Notre Dame High School. I remember her being such a beautiful seamstress. She would do anything, repairing something or making something new, for anyone who needed her help. She was a generous and kind woman.

Sister Marie Fitzpatrick, BVM (Jane Frances)

I was on the train on the morning of Sept. 8, 1943, when Florence entered. There were 10 of us from St. Mary High School, 10 from the Immaculata and 10 from Mundelein, and it was during the war. Near Christmas time, a group decided they wanted to give a gift to Sister Mary Angelice Sullivan, who was the postulant mistress. Of course, our Florence Davy was the seamstress who could put it together. I think the gift had to do with the Christmas hymn "Lo How a Rose E'er Blooming." She created this rose of white satin. In between times, she would be sewing it out of Sister Angelice's view. It could be during instructions and she would be in the back out of the way, unnoticed and sewing. She put it together and it was really beautifully done. Everything that has been said about her is true.

Sister Mary (St.) Agnes O'Connor, BVM

About 50 years ago, as a very young sister, my first teaching experience was at St. Brendan in Los Angeles. In those years, there were always two sisters who taught at Conaty High School, but they lived at St. Brendan. The reading "Wise Council" by Channing is certainly an exact picture of what I remember from 50 years ago about Florencita. She blessed my life; I was privileged.

Sister Paul Francis Bailey, BVM

I lived with Florencita five times. I lived with her on my first mission, St. Aloysius, in Kansas City. There were six superiors in the Kansas City area and they all wanted a newly professed BVM in March. Sister Mary St. Jean was the only superior who got one and I was the one. For the last three months of the school year, I sat in Sister Mary Florencita's room as she was teaching her third graders. Her students loved her because she was a loving teacher and had good composure in her classroom.

Several times we went out as companions. When the provincial came, she was concerned because she thought I was too thin; I was losing too much weight. She said, "You get her to the doctor and find out what's wrong." So Florencita was my companion. When we went into the doctor's office, every single question that the doctor asked me, Florence answered. I think I was struck dumb because she even gave the date of my birth. When we got home, she had a prescription for a very strong medicine that I knew older sisters in the house were taking. When St. Jean looked at the prescription, she said, "It would be death to that young nun!" I said, "Why don't you give it to Florencita; she answered all the questions."

Sister Irene Lukefahr, BVM

I did not have the privilege of knowing Florence in her earlier or even in her later years, but I was with her in her last 15 minutes of her life. Deb Doyle and Jackie Burke and I were present in her room. We renewed vows with Florence and we prayed the prayer of Mary Frances Clarke. By the time we were finished, Florence was gone. It was just the most peaceful experience that I have had with any of our sisters in the past few months. I consider it a real blessing to have been present as she went into the arms of our God.