



Eulogy of Sister Madalyn Hogan, BVM (Renata)
Marian Hall Chapel, May 22, 2018

Good morning and welcome to the celebration of life of our Sister Madalyn Hogan.

Madalyn Virginia Hogan entered this world on Sept. 21, 1919, as the youngest of seven children born to Joseph and Kathryn Hughes Hogan of Adair, Iowa. She joined siblings John, Veronica, with whom Maddie was especially close, Mildred, Joseph, and Ann. Her sixth sibling, Mary Clare, died as a baby. The family moved to Des Moines when Maddie was very young. She attended St. John Grade School and graduated from St. Joseph Academy.

Sister Helene Hargett, who taught at St. Joseph Academy, was a significant person in Maddie's life. She recalled, "One day Sister Helene met me before the Academy retreat started and she said, 'What are you going to do when you graduate?' 'Well, I'm going to be a Sister but I don't know where I am going to go. I can't be a BVM.' 'Why not?' 'I could never teach, I'm not smart enough.' She gave me a little scolding and the day that retreat closed, we were walking up the aisle in procession before Mass, when, just like that, I realized that I did want to be a BVM. I never questioned it again. . . . [I]t was as if the Holy Spirit came to me and told me I was going to be a BVM and that was that."

Maddie entered the congregation on Sept. 8, 1937, and received the name Renata upon her reception on March 19, 1938. On her application for admission, Maddie wrote, "I feel Christ has called me and I wish to do His Holy Will. I want to serve God in this life and prepare my soul for the life that is to come." She professed her first vows on March 19, 1940, and lived 80 years as a BVM.

Maddie taught first grade for 32 of her 42 years as a dedicated teacher. "I think my first mission [at St. Cornelius in Chicago] was the one I enjoyed the most," she commented. "It was hard because I was just beginning teaching, but we had so much fun together." She was also missioned at Our Lady of Lourdes and Holy Family in Chicago; St. Bridget in Omaha, Neb.; St. Vincent in Petaluma, Calif.; St. Anthony in Dubuque; and St. Gilbert in Grayslake, Ill. Maddie was concerned about the plight of the poor, especially among minorities. Accepting an invitation by Sister Janita Curoe, BVM, she spent two summers volunteering at Immaculate Conception school in Clarksdale, Miss., and eventually accepted a position in the Title I reading program there.

After leaving the classroom, Maddie remained in Clarksdale and ministered to the sick and elderly of the parish. She later moved to Tutwiler, Miss., where she filed insurance claims for the Tutwiler Health Clinic, which still today continues to serve thousands of the poorest among America's poor. In 1989, she returned to Dubuque and volunteered at the Marian Hall reception desk and in the activities room. Maddie was diligent, organized, and felt that perseverance was one of her greatest strengths. All these served her well during her years on the missions.

Maddie moved to the Mount Carmel campus in 1999 after falling off a ladder and breaking her neck and her wrist. She shared that being a resident here has been one of the happiest times of her life. "I love it here, everything about it. . . . Sometimes I feel guilty because our lives are so peaceful and pleasant."

Friends described Maddie as "the genuine article, a straight shooter, comfortable in her own skin, and a one-in-a-million friend." She described herself as "an old shoe." Although she traveled to New York, Wyoming, and California with the Grand Canyon as her favorite destination, she preferred to be at home. The simple life pleased

her—time with cherished friends, the chance to celebrate others, the pleasure of an A&W hot dog outing. She enjoyed reading and expressed her creativity through crocheting and painting. She was a fast card player and liked puzzles, both jigsaws and crosswords. “I cheat a lot [at crosswords],” she confessed. “I don’t cheat playing cards, but sometimes I’d like to.”

Maddie was a fun person. Her contagious laugh, some would say giggle, made people smile. Probably no one was laughing more than Maddie last Tuesday when at her Rite of Committal the hearse would not start.

Maddie’s community-mindedness and love for her BVM sisters is apparent in her funeral theme—“Surely the presence of God is in this place.” Maddie loved deeply and was deeply loved. Her sincerity, warmth, and laughter will be greatly missed. We send her off with the words of Hildegard of Bingen. Maddie, “God hugs you. You are encircled by the arms of the mystery of God.” Our hearts rejoice for you.