



**Eulogy of Sister Theresa (Amelia) Kramps, BVM**  
Marian Hall Chapel, May 10, 2020

Good morning. It is good to be together to celebrate the life of our Sister Theresa Kramps.

Theresa Louise Kramps was born Aug. 31, 1941, in Kansas City, Mo., to George and Isabel Twenter Kramps. Their first child John died before Theresa was born. She joined siblings Thomas, Barbara, Dorothy, Joseph, and Adelm with Donald, Henry, and Amelia completing the family.

Theresa received her elementary education from the BVMs at her parish school, St. Aloysius. In fact, all nine of the Kramps children graduated from St. Aloysius, with the two oldest girls in the last two graduating classes from St. Aloysius Academy. Theresa attended St. Mary High School in Independence, Mo., as a freshman but completed her secondary education at Glennon High School in Kansas City, Mo.

Theresa entered the Sisters of Charity of the Blessed Virgin Mary congregation on Aug. 2, 1959. She received the name Amelia at her reception on Feb. 3, 1960, professed first vows on Feb. 2, 1962, and lived 60 years as a BVM. Even though many members of the Set of 1959 withdrew, gatherings originally started by former members kept the set connected. These reunions meant a great deal to Theresa. She not only enjoyed attending, but even helped plan the gathering in Kansas City two years ago.

After profession, Theresa was assigned to the Motherhouse kitchen and bake house. She later worked in food service at Our Lady of Angels Academy in Clinton, Iowa; St. Tarcissus in Chicago; Our Lady of Peace in Saint Paul, Minn.; and St. Therese in Kansas City, Mo. She ministered as a resource person at St. Matthew in Phoenix; a secretary at St. Joseph in Wichita, Kan.; and a teacher's aide at St. Therese Montessori, Kansas City, Mo.

Theresa was very good with the little children in the Montessori pre-school program. She always wanted to be a teacher, so inspired by the confidence gained from this experience, she earned a Bachelor of Science degree from Kansas Newman College majoring in elementary education with a minor in library sciences. She returned to St. Joseph in Wichita as a third grade teacher and later taught fourth grade at St. John Francis Regis in Kansas City, Mo. In 1985, she completed a master's degree in library science from Emporia State University in Emporia, Kan. She was very proud of that degree.

In 2013, Theresa was asked to represent the BVM congregation at the 125th anniversary of the Diocese of Wichita. She was very touched when a former student from St. Joseph found her and conveyed that she was still remembered fondly 30 years later. The celebration day also happened to be the day Pope Francis was elected. Theresa shared, "It was a great honor for me to represent the BVMs at such an exciting time and occasion."

For almost 20 years, Theresa worked at St. Vincent's Operation Breakthrough, a child care center in Kansas City, Mo., that daily cared for hundreds of children mostly from low-income single-parent homes and area shelters. In her role as computer operator, Theresa updated student records including vaccination records, daily attendance, and meal counts, and compiled numerous reports for the state and the United States Department of Agriculture in order to receive reimbursement and funding. Running the center entailed a great amount of recordkeeping and paperwork and Theresa had a hand in completing most of it.

Growing up in a large family shaped Theresa's life and taught her many skills. She was a hard worker; she saw something that needed to be done and did it. Besides being a cook and a baker, she was a seamstress. As a novice, she worked in the sewing room making habits. After the habit became optional, she volunteered to alter clothing and always did a fine job. For many years she created a variety of handiwork, including table runners, placemats, napkins, potholders, and towels, to sell at craft shows. She even brought her crafted items to share with the Set of 1959 at their reunions. Theresa had a sewing circle at her parish and also sang in the choir, served at funeral meals, and was a member of its senior citizens group.

Theresa was proud of her Kansas City roots and enjoyed the three decades she lived there, especially because it made frequent family visits possible. Family meant everything to her; they shared a deep mutual love. When she celebrated her golden jubilee, her dress was a gift from one of her sisters. She was so proud of it and told everyone about her sister's generosity. After she arrived at Mount Carmel a few weeks ago she said, "The best thing I ever did was come here." She knew it was hard on her family, but she did not want them to bear the responsibility of caring for her.

Theresa was a sweet person, a gentle soul. She had a lovely smile, an easygoing, friendly nature and a subtle sense of humor that could be very funny. She donated blood for many years, over 100 pints before her medications prohibited her giving. Being incredibly generous, Theresa did not understand the meaning of the word no. Even though her ministry in the office at St. Vincent's Operation Breakthrough kept her very busy, Theresa, following the example of Jesus, always had time to "embrace the children and bless them" with a lots of love and attention. (Mark 10:16)

Theresa was ever steadfast and faithful, a woman with a compassionate heart who served others with loving kindness, a woman who wanted to be remembered for her great love of her family, her BVM community, and most of all, for her God.

We were indeed blessed to have Theresa among us. She showed us that every life has significance and meaning, every contribution counts, every gift holds beauty and grace. Now, in the way of an eternity that remains a mystery to the rest of us, she shines.