



Sharing of Memories of Concetta Naba, BVM

Mary Frances Clarke Chapel, Oct. 11, 2021

Sister Terese Shiners, BVM

Concetta and I lived together at St. Jerome's in Chicago in the 1950s. It was then I discovered what a kind and generous woman she is. Back in those days, we had to have a sister companion when we went out. Not only was Concetta always willing, but she was an unfailingly pleasant companion. She was often my companion when I visited my family. Not only was she a treasure to live with, but her goodness was evident to her students. This past spring, on her 100th birthday celebration, a number of these students sent greetings to her as a teacher of whom they have very special memories. Her kindness, generosity, selflessness, prayerfulness, and simplicity have been a precious gift to her BVM sisters and all those with whom she came into contact.

Mary Ann Fremgen

My memories of Concetta are all through my dog Bronx. She asked if I had a dog in my car. I told her he was at home and that I would bring him to visit. After becoming a volunteer, my dog Bronx and I visited once a week. So, for over a year, Bronx sat on her lap every week. She was delighted to have him, and she would often laugh when he gave her kisses. Her lap was small so she would hold him tight and tell him she wasn't going to let him fall. When we returned to visit in June, we met Concetta in the hall. She was excited to see us and hugged Bronx. Concetta became a source of happiness for me, providing a way for me to share Bronx with so many sisters. I am forever grateful to you, Concetta, for the joy and love you brought into my life. You were definitely the "star" in the video "Love is a four-legged word." Concetta, thank you for all the blessing you helped bring into my life.

Caroline Lansing, Billings, Mont.

Sister Concetta has been one of my dearest friends for many years. When I taught at St. Anthony School in Des Moines, Iowa, I invited Sister to share her smile and calm attitude with my students. She visited often and helped in so many ways. My class looked forward to her smile. She reminded me of a visiting angel. One day after a heavy ice storm, some students missed Sister's visiting and said, "We need to pray for Sister and hope she doesn't fall on the ice." In walks Sister and they were all smiles, clapping and welcoming her.

Since I left Des Moines 26 years ago, I have been fortunate to be able to visit Sister for a day each year, attend a mass at Mount Carmel and have a delicious lunch with her. Many times, my sister Betty, and other friends of mine came with me. They all loved visiting with Sister Concetta. On Sept. 6, 2015, I attended the honor given Sister for being a nun for 75 years. I missed seeing her this year because of COVID. Sister's ultimate goal was to serve Jesus and go to heaven. I know God welcomes her with open arms. Sister, you will be missed by everyone.

Julie Richmond, Billings, Mont., Daughter of Caroline Lansing

Like my mom, I too was a teacher. What a beautiful, giving heart Sister Concetta had! Many times, I would go to the mailbox and there was a little package with handmade bookmarks for all my students that she had made for them. I also do prison ministry and many times over the years the women in the prison were also blessed by her handiwork, scripture cards, or bookmarks that she had made for them.

My husband and I enjoyed all the cards and encouraging words she shared with us over the years. I loved stopping in to see her during our yearly trips to Iowa. I just came across the last card I received from her. She sent it to Rick and me on July 1 of this year. Her closing words were "Our Lord love and keep you." That is my prayer for you today, Sister. May our Lord love and keep you in his care as you enjoy his glorious presence. I love you and miss you.

Sister Georgeann Quinlan, BVM

On Christmas Eve, 2018, Concetta was wheeled up carrying the baby Jesus to be placed in the crib. Someone asked her later why she wasn't wearing her good dress for the occasion, and she responded that it was for Christmas Day. She was in her "layered" look we all knew. Later that evening, we had a nice reception in Caritas Dining room. Someone mentioned that she played the piano. I asked her if she would she play something. She did! The picture I took was in the slideshow of memories. It is precious!

I can see Concetta sitting at the table reading the paper every day. She called everyone "Mary." I loved being with her and want to share a second story. We were at the Serra Club picnic for Sisters a few months ago. I was at Concetta's table and she needed to head to the restroom, so I offered to take her. I was beginning to get worried that something was wrong, but no, maneuvering in the strange situation simply took time. We went back to the table and enjoyed the rest of the evening.

I have to admit that I have often thought I would like to be like her. She was herself. Didn't seem to mind what anyone thought. These are just a few thoughts on one of the only 100-year-olds I've even known.

Mary Puetz

I had Sister Concetta as a teacher and wrote and visited with her ever since then for over 60 years. She will be dearly missed.

Sister Diane Forster, BVM

One of the scripture suggestions Concetta had in her file was a short passage from the Gospel of Mark. We know that Concetta was not very tall, and of rather slight build, so understandably, this passage appealed to her.

"Jesus said, 'To what shall we compare the kingdom of God, or what parable can we use for it? It is like a mustard seed that, when it is sown in the ground, is the smallest of all the seeds on the earth. But once it is sown, it springs up and becomes the largest of plants and puts forth large branches, so that the birds of the sky can dwell in its shade.'" (Mark. 4:30-32). Then Concetta added the line, "Yes, small things can be stronger."