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L.S.J.M.

SISTER AGNES OF THE CROSS, R.J.M. (JOSEFINA DELGADO)  
Born in Parral, Chih. Mexico. February 10, 1910  
Professed in El Paso, Tex. October 11, 1930  
Died in Pacoima, Ca. November 7, 1982.

"Remember me as loving you."

Sister Agnes was born in Parral, Chih. Mexico, February 10, 1910. When she was about seven years old, her family moved to El Paso, Texas, to escape the revolution taking place in their country. Little Josefina attended public schools in El Paso. She was very popular with the friends of her two brothers (boys, of course); she played baseball with them in an empty lot near her home. When only 12, she taught catechism to the children of the neighborhood and used a stick to call to attention those who were disturbing!

Our Lord was already working in her soul; soon after, she felt an attraction to the religious vocation, so she told her spiritual director, Fr. Garde, S.J., who had her visit different convents and talk to the sisters about her vocation. She finally went to Jesus and Mary Academy to see the sisters; immediately, she liked them and asked for admission to the Novitiate. She entered that very year and made her profession on October 11, 1930.

Sister Agnes taught school for many years, she encouraged the girls to study and helped them when in need. One pupil was so fragile and sick that she cried most of the time in school. This girl was sent to Sister Agnes' class! She not only liked school, but became an R.J.M. and is still living in one of our convents in California.

During the summer months, Sr. Agnes was sent to do missionary work like the rest of the sisters; she went to New Mexico, Texas, and California where she excelled as a teacher of religion. For a short time she was sent to Merida, Yucatan, and also to Guanajuato in the Mexican Province. She taught there and did a lot of good to the sisters and to the people.

In 1952 she went to Los Angeles; at San Antonio de Padua School, she was principal, teacher of grade 8, and Superior. She also attended Immaculate Heart College during this time until the community moved to Pacoima in the San Fernando Valley, where Guardian Angel School was ready in June 1957. She was the same busy person as principal, teacher, and Superior, besides attending classes at Mount St. Mary College. It is no small wonder that in 1969, Sr. Agnes suffered a major heart attack that would have ended any normal person's active ministry.

Sr. Agnes did not make a fuss over any difficulty; she gave no importance to petty things. She was always calm and cheerful. She was truly an inspiration to the community by her faithfulness to religious and community exercises. Sr. Agnes also had a good sense of humor; she sang funny songs to amuse the old retired sisters. She loved dogs a lot! On one occasion, she dressed like Bomic, the collie, for Hallowe'en and went trick-or-treat to some houses around the neighborhood.

The community of Pacoima was located far away from the other RJM houses. This tended to isolate the community and made life somewhat difficult, especially twenty or more years ago. Sr. Agnes used to take the community quite often on picnics and made great celebrations for Christmas and Easter. She would sometimes invite neighboring communities to celebrate with hers on those occasions.

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After this, she was superior in the residence for women in San Diego, California where she also did all she could for everyone. She returned to El Paso for a short time and then left the West and worked in Fall River, Massachusetts helping in the infirmary for a whole year. She also lived at Regina in Hyattsville, Maryland.

Finally, Sr. Agnes retired to Pacoima, "her real home." During these years in Pacoima, she sold candy to the school children at recess time, helped with the lunch in the cafeteria, helped with the pupils in the first grade, taught spelling and Mathematics, also religion in the 4th Grade and enjoyed the company of everyone she met. Here she was still receiving visitors and letters from grateful parents and former students whom she had taught 25 years before. They are now successful business men and professionals.

In 1980 she celebrated her Golden Jubilee which remained for her a cherished memory. She wrote some beautiful thoughts for this event which were printed in the booklet for the Mass of the Resurrection for her funeral on November 9, 1982.

In 1981 she underwent heart bypass surgery and managed to recover. Her desire to serve was so intense that she gradually became involved in teaching special classes to prepare children for their First Holy Communion. She also tutored, encouraged and supported a student who had an inoperable brain tumor. Besides, she completed different hidden tasks around the house. No one could keep this vital person inactive!

The Lord knew that Sr. Agnes could not stay idle very long; after she had been in the hospital for two weeks, He came peacefully for her on November 7, 1982. The Mass of the Resurrection was concelebrated by Fr. Miller, the pastor as main celebrant, and Fr. Corcoles. Also present was Fr. Stroup who had been pastor of the parish when Sr. Agnes and the community first moved to Pacoima. He said of Sr. Agnes: "Please tell the sisters, I admired and appreciated Sr. Agnes very much."

In Guardian Angel School, Sr. Agnes is missed very much. To some she was a principal; to others a teacher, a mother, a sister, a good friend, but all remember her as one who loved very much. They thank God for the privilege of having had her with them the last days of her life, enjoying her good example and charity. A little book of maxims and thoughts was found which shows the spirit which animated Sr. Agnes and the philosophy that made her so attractive. It is a spiritual treasure for any religious seeking direction and spirituality, with thoughts to lift up our hearts.

Sister Mary Sagrario, Garcia, R.J.M.

