

SR. LUCILLE LAWRENCE

BORN DECEMBER 23, 1926
FIRST MONASTIC PROFESSION JULY 11, 1948
PERPETUAL MONASTIC PROFESSION JULY 11, 1951
ENTERED ETERNAL LIFE DECEMBER 21, 2012

MAY THE ANGELS LEAD HER INTO PARADISE

Sister Lucille (Julia) Lawrence, OSB, 85 died peacefully at Saint Scholastica Convent at 7:10 a.m. on Friday, 21, 2012.

Julia was born in St. Paul, Minn., the first of Francis and Margaret (Ryan) Lawrence's four children. When she was six years old the family moved to Belle Plaine where she was taught by Benedictine Sisters at Saints Peter and Paul School. At the age of 15, Julia came to St. Benedict's Monastery where she attended St. Benedict's High School, graduating in 1947. Upon entering the novitiate on June 17, 1947, she received the name Sister Lucille. She made her first monastic profession on July 11, 1948, and perpetual monastic profession on July 11, 1951. Her Golden Jubilee in 1998 and 60th Anniversary in 2008 were happy celebrations.

Following first profession, Sister Lucille studied at the St. Paul Diocesan Teachers' College for two years, and in 1950 began her long ministry as a teacher. During her 16 years of grade school teaching, she served at Sauk Rapids; St. Joseph Lab School; Pearl Lake where she was also principal; and St Paul's School in St. Cloud.

During her summers, Sister Lucille taught many religion classes and attended the College of Saint Benedict, where in 1959, she received her BA degree in elementary education. She did graduate study at the University of Minnesota and then attended St. John's University where she received and MA degree in Theology in 1968. Sister Lucille also received certificates from workshops in Pastoral Ministry, where much of the study is focused on the aging.

In 1966, Sister Lucille came to Saint Benedict's Monastery where she assisted for a year in the Formation Program and for two years in direction of Novices. From 1969-74 she served in Sauk Rapids as Adult CCD Coordinator. She returned to Saint Benedict's Monastery as Postulant Director in 1974. From 1976 to 1981, Sister Lucille served as Retirement Coordinator at Saint Benedict's Monastery and at Saint Scholastica Convent. She then returned to the field of education.

Sister Lucille was the Religious Education Coordinator in Richmond from 1981-1987. For the next six years she served as Religious Education Coordinator in Albany. Then, after three years as Assistant Coordinator at Saint Raphael's Convent in St. Cloud, Sister Lucille returned to Saint Benedict's Monastery where she was the sacristan, worked in the liturgy office and was a member of the guest house hospitality team and the summer religion program team from 1996 to February 1, 2006. Regarding her summertime religion teaching, Sister Lucille said, "I like to share the goodness of God with the children, and it's one more way I can experience God's grace."

In 2006, Sister Lucille moved to Saint Scholastica Convent. There she was the sacristan, assisted with the laundry, dining room, and various housekeeping tasks and continued her special ministry of prayer.

Sister Lucille is survived by her Benedictine community; one brother, Brother Leonard, OFM (Ashland, Wis.); and cousins. Preceding her in death were two brothers (James and John).

Sister Lucille once stated that she saw her contribution to the community as "my loyalty and willingness to do what I have been asked to do." Her gentleness, her love of teaching, and her selfless sharing of her gifts were a fruitful blessing to her community. We are assured that God has received her lovingly into the eternal joy of heaven.

WORDS OF REMEMBRANCE FOR SISTER LUCILLE LAWRENCE

Scripture: 2 Thessalonians 2:13-17; Luke 1:26-38

December 26, 2012

Among Mother Teresa's most quoted words are that God does not ask us to be successful ... He only asks us to be faithful. Mary's YES two thousand years ago does not speak of success but rather of unrelenting faithfulness to God. Today we celebrate the unrelenting faithfulness of Sister Lucille, a passionate seeker of God for 65 years as a monastic.

Little Julia was born two days before Christmas and one can delight in visualizing her parents looking at their Christmas baby and singing "What child is this ...?" She grew up quickly as she learned to cook, clean and sew while also helping to care for her three younger brothers. She continued this faithfulness to her family as Benedictine monastic who, on occasion, would go home to help her aging parents. Once, on her return from one of those visits, she tearfully told me that her dad no longer recognized her as she knelt by his wheelchair and tried to explain who she was. It wasn't too long ago that I knelt by her wheelchair and

saw that she no longer recognized me. Diminishment is not selective when it comes to giving our memories back to the heart of God.

When S. Lucille was a teacher, she was dearly loved by both children and parents. One mother whose little boy was in her class said he came home one day and told her that his teacher was full of Jesus! Later on she became the first fulltime professional Faith Formation Director in our monastic community. That ministry was dear to her heart. When monastic obedience called her elsewhere, she obeyed faithfully but not without feeling the pain of leaving the work she dearly loved. She was so faithful to rules that, in high school, one of the girls asked if Julia Lawrence ever broke a rule!

She was no captive to our culture's greed for speed but maintained that slow contemplative pace as she faithfully walked to prayer, meals and other monastic functions day after day. I believe the only time she hurried was last Friday morning when Jesus told her to leave Louise Hall and join in the dance in heaven's halls. There they could celebrate their birthdays together!

It is my perspective that VATICAN II presented S. Lucille with some real challenges so I do not think that she was a real good friend of John the XXIII! When I heard that she was slowly making her way to heaven, I looked at his photo in my office and said "Blessed John, S. Lucille is coming, so beware. She may give you a run for your money!"

Although I knew Sister Lucille for 67 years, there were times when I felt I didn't know her. Sometimes her heart seemed wrapped in a shroud of sadness and pain. Perhaps unresolved issues or painful memories were calling for her prayerful attention. Hers was a very sensitive heart ... sensitive to wounding words and sensitive to the needs of others ... always ready to lend a helping hand or a listening heart. Hers was a rare gift of PRESENCE to another. Kind words seemed to be small nuggets of grace to her and KINDNESS the highest form of wisdom. At times she could surprise one with her subtle sense of humor. Once, when she was working in a parish, I reminded her of the wonderful pastor she had to which she replied, "Oh, he's a pretty good egg"!

Thus, but only for a time, do we bid farewell to our S. Lucille whom Jesus would call a good and faithful servant. Now we ask of her just two favors. First ... that while she basks in the warmth of God's eternal love, she will pray for us that we too might be passionate seekers of God, as that is the primary task of Benedictines; secondly, that she will strive to become a very close friend of John the XIII! We need his wit and wisdom to sing and build a new inclusive Church.

May eternal joy be yours, S. Lucille, and be assured that sooner or later, we will all join you in the dance.

S. Kathleen Rademacher