

SISTER JAMES LOUISE KRUG
August 10, 1917 - May 2, 2006

Dear Mother Claudia, “I am asking to be considered to become a professed Sister. I realize that I have not made use of all the opportunities given me, but if God wants me to get my balance better, I will be satisfied to remain a Junior Professed Sister. I am very grateful for my vocation and God grant that I always will be.” This letter signed by Sister James Louise on October 20, 1945, is indicative of her humility, her gratitude for her vocation and her complete devotion to God’s will. This was true then, and it was true sixty seven years later on May 2 when God called her home.

Louise Elizabeth was born on August 10, 1917, in Ashville, to James and Olive Krug. The Krug household was made up of her brothers and sisters, Gerald, Raymond and Philip, Ruth (who died as a baby), Anna, Vera and Ida, now all deceased.

Sister’s mother, a teacher, was very firm about the children doing well in school. She would seat them around the table each evening after dinner to hear their lessons and give help when that was needed.



The Krug Family owned a two hundred sixty-seven acre farm. Some of it was woods, but much of it was a working farm which provided a living for the family. Her father died in his forties. A farm that size needed many hands to be successful and those hands were provided by the children and their mother. They grew vegetables and potatoes; cultivated fruit trees and berries to sell. They had fields of wheat and corn to use as food for their animals. They had a large number of chickens who gave them dozens of eggs to sell. In addition, they tended and cared for many animals. Louise gave them each a name and called them by it when she milked them. Their herd of cows was large enough that they sold milk, on a daily basis, to a commercial company. All of this transpired during the depression years.

Louise never found this lifestyle difficult. She told me once, “I loved it. I never considered it work.” She said that she delighted getting her hands dirty in “the sweet smelling soil” and that the dirtier they got, the better she liked it. “That gave me life and God was always with me,” she said.

Sister James Louise said that she never thought what she would do when she entered. She knew she wanted be a Sister and that was all that was important to her. When she finished her novitiate days she was sent to teach. She loved the children passionately, but sad to say, she never felt she was a successful teacher. Even though that may not have been so, it was so real to her that she often asked to be given another ministry. She taught in a variety of grades in six different dioceses. Finally, after thirty-one years of teaching, her wish was granted when she was assigned to another ministry. During those thirty-one years in the classroom, she never complained because, as she put it, “I made a vow of Obedience and it was God’s will that I teach.” Then she added, “I feel light and free now.”

Sister was an intense, serious person when it came to living her religious life. In many ways she was “a letter of the law person,” living her life in a strict interpretation of our Constitutions and of God’s expectations for her. She read a great deal, usually spiritual books, seldom if ever delving into lighter secular books. Any books that were her personal property and her well used, much mended Bible, were marked with highlighting and her comments about a verse or sentence in the books. She even filled the blank inside cover of her books with her thoughts about her readings and about God in her life.

Sister was happiest when she worked in her garden and when she was offering herself in service to others. She never felt that anything was too much or too difficult to do for others. The status of the person meant nothing to her. She served all equally.

Sister James Louise was very talented. There wasn’t much she couldn’t do. She drove the Sisters wherever they needed to go. She cut hair and sewed, doing personal mending for the Sisters, as well as repair mending for the housekeeping department. Sister James Louise’s dear friend and faithful volunteer, Rosemary Cook, told me that Sister taught her all kinds of sewing tricks that saved a piece of clothing from being discarded or a sheet from ending up a duster. She had a tool chest fit for a queen, which she used to repair furniture, lamps, sewing machines and to work on some inventive contraptions she dreamed up. The maintenance men were not ashamed to ask her advice at times. That delighted her. I gave the tool box to the Maintenance department when Sister no longer used it. The men “ooed and awed” at the array of tools. One of them said “I’d give my right arm to own that box of tools.”

Sister was loved by our nursing and dietary staff. They delighted in caring for her. This morning one of them told me, “We felt she was serving us these past years because of the joy and laughter she brought to us. We will miss her very much.”

Sister was a simple, uncomplicated, generous, happy lady. She found her God in us, her Sisters; in you, her family; and in all she served as she gave herself to us through the work of her hands, through her sense of humor, her contagious laugh, her joy in teasing and her love for us.

May our Sister who, throughout her life, tilled the soil, planted the seeds, nurtured the plants, and took in the harvest, enjoy the fruits of that harvest for all eternity.

I had hoped to give us all a sense of who this dear lady was. I’m not sure I was able to do that with mere words, so I ask each of you to take the part of her you experienced and, like our Mother Mary, keep that part in your hearts; then she will always be with us.

*Funeral Liturgy Reflection
Sister Harold Ann Jones
May 5, 2006*