

REFLECTION ON THE LIFE OF SISTER REGINA ORNER
May 21, 1937 – August 18, 2013

Psalm 131

*O Lord, my heart is not proud
Nor haughty my eyes.
I have not gone after things too great
Nor marvels beyond me.*



Psalm 131 seems to help me describe Sister Regina Orner.

Regina left Altoona to join the Sisters of Charity of Seton Hill fifty-eight years ago. She said the kindness, patience, understanding, and helpfulness of the Sisters at Altoona Catholic High School made her long to join their congregation.

Regina was the daughter of Duayne and Aneina (Anina) Weller Orner. She had three brothers whom she adored. William and Duayne preceded Regina in death. Robert and wife Ann were visited by Sister Regina several months ago. (Ann is with us today with her faithful niece Joyce. We extend our prayers and sympathy and appreciate the effort it took to get here.) She also has several nieces and nephews. Sister Regina loved her family dearly and always spoke of them in such loving terms. Before Sister returned to her baptismal name she was Sister Mary Duayne, lovingly nicknamed “Dewy” like her father and brother. After her brother Dewy retired as an air traffic controller, he took organ lessons. He would call Sister Regina in the late evening and play the organ with the phone on the organ seat. This way his sister could hear him play.

Sister Regina taught school in Altoona-Johnstown, Greensburg, and Pittsburgh. After teaching, her ministry varied from working with independent but needy women at Mary House, to teaching English as a second language, to her last love as coordinator of the mailroom. The one concern she shared with us in the ICU room at Presby was wanting to return to the mailroom. Although later she quipped, “at least I won’t have to worry about those foreign stamps.” She dozed, then later she repeated, “Yea, no more foreign stamps!”

Sister Regina was a quiet, unassuming person—from the mailroom, to caring for small critters, to love of classical music, the study of history and the drawing of cartoons, she moved about her daily routine. She loved to draw cartoons and was very good at it. When we were Junior Professed her cartoons decorated several classrooms at the end of the summer.

Her favorite character was Snoopy. Snoopy is part of the Peanuts comic strip. (For those of us unfamiliar with Snoopy, we brought him along. Sister Patricia Mary brought this to Regina after she returned to Caritas, and Regina greeted Snoopy with a kiss.) Charles Schulz, the creator of Snoopy, referred to him as a “little Christian.” He said he is a fairly drawn caricature for what is probably a typical Christian. At times he can be the meanest character in the strip. He can be sarcastic, stubborn and sometimes he becomes weary of his situation. At these times you may find him on top of his house reflecting on the whole situation but never saying a word.

Charlie Brown describes his wonderful qualities of loyalty, watchfulness, courage, patience and responsibility.

In art, literature, and the Bible, the dog is seen in lowliness, complete obedience, and humility at the feet of his master in service to others. Although he loves his independence, he is totally dependent on the will of his master.

It was mentioned last evening, among many wonderful memories, that Sister Regina was a woman of wisdom. Her wisdom was shown in the words she chose to end her little biographical sketch. The words of our beloved Mother Seton:

*“Put your heart at His feet;
it is the gift He loves most.”*

O Lord, my heart is not proud nor haughty my eyes.
I have not gone after things too great nor marvels beyond me.

Rest in peace Regina.

*Funeral Liturgy Reflection
~ Mary Victor Powers, SC
August 21, 2013*