

REFLECTION ON THE LIFE OF SISTER IRENE MARY WILBURN OCTOBER 12, 1937–SEPTEMBER 3, 2016



Sixty-one years ago on this day, September 8, 1955, Irene Carol Wilburn entered the Sisters of Charity of Seton Hill.

She was the daughter of William Wilburn and Irene Wolf.

Irene was very proud of her two brothers. She always referred to them as “Our Larry” and “Our Bill.”

Irene's Mom, Dad and “Our Larry” were waiting for her last Saturday night. “Our Bill” and his wife Virginia were here last week and had to return home. Today we welcome her niece Amy and members of her family.

Sister Irene Mary’s years in active ministry were consumed with her love for education, and especially for children with special needs.

She served as teacher, principal, director of education, and educational consultant in various dioceses.

In response to the question “What obstacle do you experience in your ministry?” she referred to the document “A Lifelong Process of Becoming,” which stated what we should each be striving for—that is, compassionate concern and affection for our sisters in community and for those whom we serve.

These issues were constantly coming to mind and caused some wrestling with the integration of the various aspects of her life. She said she believed community affected her ministry as well as ministry affecting community.

We are all well aware of her gift of sewing and decorating. She loved to sew and decorate, which in so many ways reflected the inner beauty of our sister.

At the time of her retirement from the ministry she loved, she sent a copy of this simple little poem by Nettie Garnish to a friend.

LET GOD'S LOVE SHINE THROUGH

Let God's love shine through by the way that we live.
Be compassionate and caring with the love that we give.
Bringing sunshine to others on a dark, cloudy day.
With a smile and friendship as we go on our way.

We have a warm, happy feeling when we are thoughtful and kind.
There are treasures beyond measure that we surely will find.
When we please our dear Father by the way that we live.
With concern for others and the love that we give.

*Funeral Liturgy Reflection
Sister Mary Victor Powers
September 8, 2016*