

Reflection on Sr. Teresa Wolfe

Just as the potter formed a vessel of beauty, Teresa was formed into a person of beauty and goodness by her parents Tom and Winona Wolfe.

As I was praying about giving this reflection on Teresa and the fact she died so close to the feast of St. Dominic the four pillars of our Dominican tradition came to mind: Prayer, Study, Ministry and Community. Therefore, it seemed fitting to share with you how I observed how Teresa lived out and embodied these 4 pillars.

PRAYER

Teresa was indeed faithful to prayer. Her contemplation flowed into action through her acts of kindness, thoughtfulness and compassion for others. We saw how she bore with patient endurance the pain and suffering of these past months and weeks with her struggle to breath and the constant arthritic pain.

She had a favorite prayer of Thomas Merton's that she often asked me to pray with her. A phrase from the prayer reads: "I will trust you always though I may seem to be lost and in the shadow of death. I will not fear, for you are ever with me and you will never leave me to face my perils alone. One of the staff members commented on how she enjoyed hearing Teresa and Agnes pray aloud. What a beautiful witness of faith to the staff!

STUDY

Teresa spent several summers of study at Creighton University in Omaha for her Master's Degree in English. Teresa's parents were very proud of her achievements but were not overly boastful of her accomplishments.

As the Director of the Pastoral Care Department in Kearney, NE she was often called upon to speak on Death/Dying, Ethical issues and other related topics that required research and study. Teresa took these requests seriously and was adequately prepared for these presentations. The particular groups were appreciative of her input and insights.

While a member of Hope Community at the Motherhouse she actively participated in the Monday night discussions where she shared wisdom and truth on the selective topics for study.

MINISTRY

Her ministries were rich and full in the service of God's people. She was principal and teacher at respective schools in NE. Illinois and Iowa. After Vatican 11 she was appointed as the first Western Regional Coordinator. As you may recall at this time we went through some significant changes in our lives. Teresa led us through them and walked with us with faith and courage. Later she served as pastoral minister and was Director of Pastoral Care at Good Samaritan Hospital in Kearney, NE for about 16 years. After retiring as Chaplain she moved to KY where she was Assistant Coordinator at Sansbury Care Center and assisted the Archivist for 5 years. In each of these capacities of service and ministry she was highly respected and held in high regard.

COMMUNITY

Teresa participated in all aspects of community life and was an asset to the life of the local community. I lived with her in local community for about 11 years where there was an exchange of thoughts and ideas for the common good. Of course, there were the usual "rubes" of living in community but overall Teresa maintained an attitude of peace and patience.

She had a good sense of humor and enjoyed a good party. She was always kind and respectful of others. Whenever anyone visited her or the Staff at Sansbury came in to care for her no one ever left without a smile or a thank you. She held solid and wholesome friendships and this we attest to from her long and lasting friendship with Agnes.

Teresa, you are a treasure for the Kingdom and lived life as a true Dominican. Today we commend you to the glory of God and know your parents, Tom and Winona are welcoming you into God's embrace as is your dear friend, Agnes, who is waiting for you to join her in a game of Spite and Malice.

Sr. Rita Carr