

MARGUERITE GREEN, rscj - September 2, 1922-August 26, 1997

"By our charism. we are consecrated
to Glorifying the Heart of Jesus
we answer his call
to discover and reveal His love
letting ourselves be transformed by His Spirit
So as to live united and conformed to Him
and through our love and service
to radiate the very love of His Heart.

Constitutions of 1984 - #4

This quotation from our Constitutions reflects the love, service and radiance of Marguerite Green for over fifty years in the Society. For those who had known Marg for most of these years, it was a shocking loss when she was called suddenly to her loving Lord. But to her who lived so closely united to Him in life, it must have been an easy transition to close her eyes Sunday night and open them in His presence Tuesday morning.

Marg's characteristics of loving acceptance of other persons, her delight in the exchange of views in thoughtful dialogue, her appreciation of beauty in nature, her love of serious reading and her gift of deep, mystic prayer were formed early in life. The large family of four girls and two boys lived in Highland Park, Illinois with their fine parents, Edward A. Green and Mary Prindeville Green. A traditional Sunday morning brunch - never missed by anyone - was the scene of lively discussions and exchange of ideas and values. Vacations in Wisconsin at Lake Geneva nourished the love of beauty in nature, as did the ravines surrounding the Green home. Marg was sent to the Academy in Lake Forest and attended Barat College from 1939-1943, graduating with a B.A. in history. She made lasting friends, many of whom continued to meet each summer until 1996. Marg found her college years very exciting as she was exposed to many currents of social action, Catholic literature and philosophy, and political change in the Depression and war years. She said it was an easy step for her to enter the Society in 1944, the same year her brother, Austin, entered the Dominican Order. Her other brother, Redmond, had died at age 16 the previous April.

Marg sensed in the Society a dedication to love and learning, twin aspects of its vital educational activity. Her enthusiasm for the world of ideas was heightened by her graduate work at the Catholic University in Washington, D.C. Researching for her dissertation on the labor movement gave her a powerful encounter with social justice and injustice, which revealed the process of history to her. Issues of justice remained important to her all her life.

Then began her long tenure at Barat College, which lasted until 1983. This period of her life brought her great fulfillment as she communicated her love of the world of ideas to her students. They appreciated her scholarship and knew they had to strive to do their best work in her classes. She was the driving force behind Barat's academic excellence in those years with her work on the College Senate and on the Curriculum Committee. She was sought after to give lectures and to lead discussions. She also strengthened her internationality by doing Japanese studies at Sophia University in Tokyo, the History of Women at the University of London, and studied the Middle East.

But in the late 60's and early 70's the changes sweeping the world affected both the College and religious life. With her deep and serious historical insight, Marg entered profoundly into those changes. She did what she could for the large community at Barat, to

analyze and to move beyond the restrictions of cloister. She even gave example by leading a group of students to Selma, Alabama, to participate in the voting rights march there. Her like-minded Superior encouraged it, even though the Society was still cloistered in the 1960s.

To facilitate and to better understand the coming changes in the Society, Marg wrote position papers which were not always accepted readily. In fact, she was considered a "revolutionary" by some more conservative persons. That did not bother Marg nearly as much as seeing some of her best friends leaving the Society. She never considered leaving religious life; she wanted to work within our heritage and lived experience to make progress from within.

The last years Marg was in the College were made still more painful by the power struggles among the faculty. Reluctantly, because of her integrity, she realized she could do no more there. She joined the World Without War Council in Berkeley, California, and spent some happy years in San Francisco. She spread love and joy to those in the San Francisco area and to her dear sister, Bee, who lived in the Bay Area.

But the Heart of Jesus was calling her to a deeper union with Him and His Cross. She developed painful arthritis and was beginning to suffer a hearing loss. A brief stint in the Provincial House, where she had hoped to serve the Society ended when she was hospitalized. With her move to Oakwood and Gatehouse Community, she improved sufficiently to work in the high school library. She continued to share her own love of books and kept many of us up to date with the delightful annotated book lists. Her union and conformity to Jesus, her exuberant love of all God's creatures: people, animals, trees, flowers and birds combined to bring her life of prayer to mystic heights. During these difficult years she was able to visit Chicago each summer to see her sister, Jeanne, and many nephews and nieces and also to share with her old friends.

Early in the summer of 1996 she prepared to celebrate the 50 years since her First Vows. She wrote of her retreat at Boulder Creek: "It was spent in memories and thanking God for the amazing gifts of these years; great friendships, the joy of teaching, and the challenge of unprecedented change. There I prayed, allowing the beauty of the redwoods and the loveliness of nature to speak to me of the Divine Presence - an experience of the Heart at the center of Creation, feeling the universe full of light and peace."

Her visit to Chicago shortly afterward was painful as she was obviously very ill. Returning to Oakwood, she underwent a difficult surgery. During the 6 to 7 month recovery period, she gradually regained her powers. She planned to come to Barat College's dedication of the new library for September 18. Many of her friends had made plans to celebrate with her. Instead, Our Lord came for her suddenly in her sleep. She is celebrating and glorifying Him now. The pain, suffering and confusion of these last years have been replaced by the radiance and knowledge of His Eternal Love.

Marg's Dominican brother, Austen, said the touchingly beautiful funeral liturgy. Her loved family: two sisters, a brother-in-law, two nieces and a nephew accompanied Marg to her final resting place in the Oakwood Cemetery. They and we, her religious family, felt we had just celebrated the loss of a very special woman.