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Revelation 21:4

“He will wipe every tear
from their eyes.
There will be no more
death or mourning
or crying or pain,
for the old order of things
has passed away.”

Blessings on the Journey

If you would like to share memories and stay connected with the Sisters, we welcome your visits, correspondence and calls. Our doors and our hearts are open to you!

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To honor the memory of Sister Lorita and her loving concern for others, a donation can be made to the Franciscan Sisters of the Sacred Heart to further our works of neighborly love for those in need.

Thank you for enabling Sister to continue doing good on earth through your generosity.

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FRANCISCAN SISTERS OF THE SACRED HEART

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In Loving
Memory



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Sr. M. Lorita Lawler, OSF

1929—2016



“NO SOUL THAT HAS CALLED UPON MY MERCY
HAS BEEN DISAPPOINTED.”

- FROM THE *DIARY OF ST. FAUSTINA*

Sr. Lorita

At Rest
May 9, 2016

Sister Lorita Lawler was born on August 13, 1929, in Ridgway, IL, to Augustus and Teresa Lawler and was given the name Etta. She had the blessing of growing up in a devoted and religious family with her twin sister, six other sisters, one brother and a cousin she called her foster sister. Her father passed away when she was twelve years old, and three years later her brother joined the army, leaving her mother and the girls to tend the farm. Along with the outdoor work, her mother taught the girls to cook and sew, talents which Etta continued to effectively use throughout her life. In the Lawler home, each day began with morning prayers and ended with the praying of the rosary. Having no electricity, radio or telephone, the family would often fill their evenings singing songs or being entertained by their mother on the piano. As a high school senior, Etta had the distinguished honor of being voted as the Popcorn Queen for the First Popcorn Festival ever to be held in Illinois. For this occasion, she received a gold necklace and bracelet and a crown made chiefly of popcorn.

After finishing high school, Etta prayed that God would show her what He wanted her to do with her life. It was then that she came across an article in the Sunday Visitor about our congregation

that put in her heart a desire to be a religious sister. She began corresponding with Sister Clara Marie Dietz whose warm and welcoming letters drew her to our congregation as did her special devotion to the Sacred Heart.

On September 8, 1953, Etta left her home in Ridgway for the Motherhouse in Joliet, IL, to begin her journey with the Franciscan Sisters. From that time on, she fixed her eyes on the Lord and faithfully followed in his footsteps. She was received into the novitiate on June 21, 1954, and was given the name Sister M. Lorita. On August 3, 1956, she professed her First Vows and three years later made Perpetual Vows on August 3, 1959.

Following First Profession, Sister Lorita began a teaching career that would take her to various schools staffed by our Sisters in Illinois and Indiana. During the 40+ years spent in the classroom, she deeply touched the hearts and lives of children in the primary grades. She especially enjoyed the younger children because of being able to form them, not only mentally, but also spiritually, at such an impressionable age. At the conclusion of each school year, seeing how the children had progressed over the entire nine months gave her much satisfaction. After stepping out of the classroom permanently, she continued her contact with and influence on the children by being a faithful pen pal.

In June 1999 Sister Lorita was missioned to the Motherhouse where she continued to use her many gifts for the good of others. Along with being an excellent seamstress, Sister showed her creativity, which seemed to know no bounds, through numerous crafts and projects. She also willingly set aside her own personal agenda and served as a driver for the Sisters at the Motherhouse. Her love for creation was expressed by her frequent trips into the woods to find monarch caterpillars for many to delight in as they experienced their metamorphosis.

In everything that Sister Lorita did, she exemplified a precious love, gentleness, peace and joy. Her faithfulness was sustained by a deep prayer life and a strong belief in the divine mercy and love of Jesus. Her special devotion to Our Lady was evident in her continual praying of the rosary. Sister felt specially blessed to journey to Medjugorje, where the Blessed Mother has appeared since 1981. On the occasion of her 60th Jubilee in 2013, Sister said that she was so grateful to God and could not thank him enough for calling her to be a Franciscan Sister of the Sacred Heart.

After a time of illness and with total readiness and acceptance, Sister passed into the loving embrace of her God on May 9, 2016. We extend our deepest sympathy to her sisters, Sister Mary Gabriel, her twin, Sister Mary Rachel, Theresa, Louise, Margaret, her brother William, her foster sister Kathleen, and the many other family members. We will deeply miss her prayerful spirit and quiet, gentle manner which have always been an inspiration to us.

Sister Lorita, we pray that your love and fidelity will continue to inspire us to greater faithfulness and that your name will be beautifully inscribed in the Book of Life for all eternity. Alleluia! Alleluia!

Interment: St. John the Baptist Cemetery, Joliet, Illinois

FRANCISCAN SISTERS OF THE SACRED HEART

Mary, Queen of Peace,
pray for us!