

Eulogy for Marguerite White, DW

1/17/29 – 7/2/17

Sr. Ann Casagrande, DW

Friends,

Today, we celebrate Marguerite's new life. I am very humbled and honored to be able to present this Eulogy – actually, the best one to give this would be Marguerite herself and she would do it humbly and with great humor. Therefore, I have asked Marguerite, from her seat in heaven, to coach me during these days!



Marguerite was born in 1929 in Brooklyn, New York to Mary Ann and Patrick White. She attended Bishop McDonnell High School, where she met the Daughters of Wisdom as well as the Sisters of Charity. Although entering the Daughters of Wisdom, Marguerite always held a special spot in her heart for the Sisters of Charity and Mother Elizabeth Seton.

She made her first vows in the Daughters of Wisdom in 1951. Her first assignment was to Maryhaven, where she taught first grade for one year. She also attended St. John's

University, where she later received a Bachelor's Degree in Social Science.

During these years of studying, Marguerite was also at St. Charles Hospital, Brooklyn, and St. Charles Hospital, Port Jefferson. During this time, Marguerite became a Registered Medical Technologist and filled this role from 1955 to 1965. In fact, Marguerite became the laboratory supervisor of Good Samaritan Hospital when it first opened in 1959.

From 1966 to 1968, Marguerite went to St. Louis University, where she received her MSW in Social Work. During her early years, Marguerite learned to love the hospital world and spent the next twelve years doing Social Work in Methodist Hospital in Brooklyn, NY.

Deciding that she had enough time in hospitals, she went to work in the New York Foundling in 1981. She worked as a foster care worker. Marguerite described it as "tragic work" but also stated that "she loved it". She was a specialist in teenagers – and would receive calls from Travelers Aid or the Police requesting that she claim an AWOL teenager stranded in New Orleans, Dallas or some other city. In 1992, Marguerite was promoted to supervisor of the Brooklyn unit and held this position with the same energy, dedication and initiative that she had given to her teenagers as a Caseworker.

She later was employed by the Nursing Sisters Home Visiting Services in Suffolk, LI. As you can see, Marguerite did not sit much and she truly was involved with the "messiness" of life – she

walked with those who were dealing with hardships in life – always caring and compassionate with God’s poor.

In 1997, past the usual retirement age, she went to work in the Parish Social Ministry of St. Raymond’s Church in East Rockaway, NY. At the time of her Golden Jubilee, celebrated at St. Raymond’s, the parish described Marguerite’s love as “amazingly quiet – not a verbal quiet - but a love that is in action, a love which is unpretentious, humble, sincere and Christ-like”

Marguerite’s qualities can be described in many ways. To me, an outstanding one was her fidelity to God, family, friends, community and the people she served. Remembering her family, she always prayed for our service men and women serving in harm’s way.

Marguerite would sometimes look at some of our sisters who were shy and retiring and she would say –at her wake, people will say she was “sweet” - “no one will call me sweet”. On Monday morning, when I received information from the Provincial House, Lori said in her email, “she was such a sweet lady”. I had to smile. Rosalie, also at the Provincial House said, “I know she went directly to God’s hands and had a joke ready” Again, I smiled and wondered if maybe Marguerite and God were still talking at the Gate! What a joyful reunion!

Marguerite had a great devotion to Mary, and a deep spiritual life. Her prayer life and faith supported her in all the hardships of life that she encountered in her work.

Recently, Richard Rohr, a theologian, described the passage from Exodus, when Yahweh meets with Moses. At the end of the meeting, God did not tell Moses to worship or attend a church service, God says, “Go make a difference, Moses”

As I look at Marguerite’s life – the continual service to others and her fidelity, I get the impression that at the end of her prayer times, God said, “Go make a difference, Marguerite!” And she did!

7/8/17