



## *Sisters of St. Francis of Mary Immaculate*

On Thursday, March 3, 2011, our Sister Eugene Belmonte peacefully entrusted herself to the companionship of Sister Death. Earlier that day, as witnessed by those who kept watch at her bedside, the good news proclaimed from St. Mark's Gospel took on special meaning: "Take courage; get up, Jesus is calling you." (Mark 10:50) Attentive to the sacredness of her final hours among us, one could almost hear the voice of Jesus saying: "Benvenuta, cara mia, quanto sei bella per me." (Welcome, my beloved one, how beautiful you are to me.)

Born on the near Westside of Chicago, Illinois, to her parents Maria (Broccolo) and Eugene Belmonte on June 17, 1918, Assunta Veronica Belmonte was one of seven children. Sadly for the family, two of the children, the only boys, died as infants. As a young girl, Susie, as she was affectionately known, took her place in the middle of her four sisters, Carmela, Theresa, Anna and Angelina. As a child, she attended St. Callistus Parish. In 1932, she graduated from St. Mary's High School and began working in an office. At the age of 26, she became a postulant with the Sisters of St. Francis of Mary Immaculate on January 27, 1945. She entered the novitiate on August 12 of the same year and received the religious name Sister Mary Eugene. She professed her first vows two years later in 1947. Diligent in her studies at the College of St. Francis, Sister Eugene was most eager to teach young children. Prior to making her final profession on August 12, 1950, she wrote in her letter of request to Mother Immaculate the following words: "I hope that with the grace of God I may be able to do His work for many, many years. I realize I can never be thankful enough for this great privilege of teaching His little ones how to love Him and to bring them closer to Christ." Over the years, she devoted herself to lifelong learning in the service of those to whom she ministered as teacher and as religious educator. Looking back on her 43 years in the ministries of parish-based elementary education and catechesis, mostly in the Archdiocese of Chicago, it is evident that Sister Eugene's hopes were more than fulfilled.

In her later years, Sister Eugene took special delight in assisting with projects that benefitted others. Among the most memorable and noteworthy of these projects was

# Alleluia!



*Sister M. Eugene Belmonte, OSF*

one that she actually began years earlier, namely, making as many rosaries as possible for missionaries, seminarians, young people, families and friends. During her years at Resurrection Life Center, her room was a hub of rosary-making activity. It is said that during her lifetime, Sister Eugene oversaw the making of thousands of rosaries, of which over 9,000 went to Africa alone. Moved by her devotion to the Blessed Mother, Sister Eugene undertook the mission of enabling countless others throughout the world to enter more deeply into the mysteries of joy, light, sorrow and glory as they endeavored to follow Christ more closely in faith, hope, love and prayer.

During her life, Sister Eugene took special pride in her Italian heritage. She enjoyed translating an occasional newspaper article, a prayer, a song or a poem. Even as the diminishment of life affected her mind and body, her friendly *paisan* spirit remained. Readily engaged by the question: "Come stai?" she would energetically reply with a gleeful look in her eye: "Bene, molto bene!" For all who knew and loved Sister Eugene, the memory of this signature response continues to serve as a reminder of her legacy of goodness.

Centuries ago, the Franciscan mystic, Jacopone da Todi, wrote in his Lauds: "La bontate infinita, vol infinito amore, mente, senno e core, lo tempo e l'esser dato." [That perfect Good which hath no end, Demands of us a love complete: Mind, sense and heart, all at His feet, Our life in time, our very selves to spend.] What perfect words with which to remember with gratitude the life of our Sister Eugene, a life she so generously spent *per l'amore di Dio* – for the love of God. Amen, Alleluia!

## *Sister M. Eugene Belmonte, OSF*

*June 17, 1918 — March 3, 2011*

<i>Born:</i>	June 17, 1918
<i>Parents:</i>	Eugene and Marie (Broccolo) Belmonte
<i>Postulancy:</i>	January 27, 1945
<i>Novitiate:</i>	August 12, 1945
<i>First Profession:</i>	August 12, 1947
<i>Final Profession:</i>	August 13, 1950
<i>Entered New Life:</i>	March 3, 2011

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### **Ministry History**

1947-1948	Teacher: Grade 3; St. Mary Magdalene, Columbus, Ohio
1948-1951	Teacher: Grade 2; St. Boniface, Chicago, Illinois
1951-1952	Teacher: Grades 1 and 2; Corpus Christi, Columbus
1952-1953	Teacher: Grades 1 and 2; Our Lady of Guadalupe, Chicago
1953-1956	Teacher: Grades 3 and 4; St. Clement, Chicago
1956-1957	Teacher: Grades 3 and 4; Guardian Angel Home, Joliet, Illinois
1957-1958	Teacher: Grade 5; Sacred Heart, Englewood, Chicago
1958-1961	Teacher: Grades 5 and 6; St. Francis of Assisi, Chicago
1961-1963	Teacher: Grade 4; SS. Peter and Paul, Chicago
1963-1964	Teacher: Grade 3, St. Jude, Joliet
1964-1970	Teacher: Grade 2; St. Clement, Chicago
1970-1977	Teacher: Grade 3; St. Pascal, Chicago
1977-1990	Teacher: Grade 5, St. Constance, Chicago
1990-1998	Community Service: Our Lady of Angels, Joliet
1998-2009	Special Ministry: Resurrection Life Center, Chicago
2009-2011	Community Service: Our Lady of Angels, Joliet

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<i>Wake:</i>	Friday, March 11, 2011, 2:00-6:45 p.m., Our Lady of Angels, Joliet
<i>Prayer Service:</i>	Friday, March 11, 2011, 4:45 p.m., Our Lady of Angels, Joliet
<i>Mass of Christian Burial:</i>	Friday, March 11, 2011, 7:00 p.m., Our Lady of Angels, Joliet
<i>Burial:</i>	Saturday, March 12, 2011, leaving Our Lady of Angels at 9:00 a.m. to Resurrection Cemetery, Romeoville, Illinois
<i>Interment:</i>	Section 8, Lot 361, Grave 2, Resurrection Cemetery
<i>Predeceased by:</i>	Her parents, Eugene and Marie (Broccolo) Belmonte, and her sisters Carmela Belmonte and Anna Mastrangeli
<i>Survived by:</i>	Her sisters, Theresa and Angelina Belmonte, and her brother-in-law Orlando Mastrangeli

*Rest in Peace, Sister Eugene*