Remembrance of Sr. Marie Vincent Chiaravalle on November 30, 2021

On a spring day in 1929 God blessed Salvatore and Amelia Chiaravalle with a daughter, Dolores Marie. She was educated in the Niagara Falls school system and graduated from high school in 1948. Five years later she entered the Franciscan Sisters of Allegany. Over the years she continued her education and earned a Bachelor Degree in Education.

For 15 years Sr. Marie Vincent taught in elementary schools in New Jersey, New York and Mississippi. Then in 1969 she attended St. Clare Hospital School of Radiology and in 1971 received certification in x-ray technology. This began her many years of ministry in the healthcare field.

In 1979 she went to Niagara Falls to take care her mother. After her mother’s death in 1980, Marie Vincent returned to St. Clare Hospital and later became the Clinical Supervisor of the EKG/x-ray department.

However, God had more for her to do. On April 1, 1990 Marie Vincent was asked to be the Administrator of the Villa Francisco in Ft. Myers, Florida. She was strict about having everyone that lived in the apartments follow the rules, but always made sure the senior citizens had all they needed to enjoy their life in the apartments.

After doing such a good job of taking care of the senior citizens for fourteen years, the Congregation asked Marie Vincent to be the Local Minister of St. Elizabeth in Tampa, Florida. In 2006 she decided it was time to retire and returned to Ft. Myers. She went back to Tampa for a year before she decided in 2014 to go north and enjoy living with the Motherhouse Community.

Marie Vincent did not spend much time talking, but energized by her competitive spirit, she was all action when it came to having the highest score in Wii Bowling. She also seemed to get the right boards to win at bingo. However, as the years went by, she suffered the loss of her sight, hearing and ability to walk. Thus she could no longer enjoy those activities. With Sr. Pamela Gellineau’s help, she continued to play rummikub and members on the staff would take her outside for a ride in her wheelchair.

In time she began to ask God for another change, that is, to go to Heaven. Being God, He knew when it would be a good time for her to go to her heavenly home. So, at 11:12 AM on Thanksgiving Day He welcomed her to the eternal banquet table in Heaven.

Whenever the Motherhouse community would sing the Blessing of St. Francis at a funeral or to a group of people at a special occasion, I remember hearing Marie Vincent’s monotone voice praising God. So, with joy I can imagine Marie Vincent singing the words of Psalm 108, “My heart is ready, God; I will sing. Sing your praise and make music with all my soul.”

Sr. Rosemary Higgins