**Sr. Victoria Masterpaul**

**Date of Birth: January 22, 1936**

**Entered Eternal Life: April 15, 2019**

**Eulogy by: Margaret Mary Kimmins OSF**

On behalf of the Franciscan Sisters of Allegany, I welcome you, friars, sisters, friends and especially Joey and Carol, Vicki’s brother and sister in law and her nieces Rebecca, Corena and her nephew Vincent. Monica, her third niece could not be with us today. We come together today to celebrate the new life of Vicki Masterpaul.

Vicki’s ministries and talents were so varied. She was a compassionate nurse, an excellent teacher at St. Clare’s and Our Lady of Lourdes Nursing Schools, a counselor in our Formation Program (two of her candidates are celebrating their Golden Jubilee this year). She was Local Minister of the Motherhouse, Pastoral Care Associate at St. Francis Hospital in Miami Beach. She returned to Our Lady of Lourdes to do patient relations and then she served as Regional Minister for eight years in Region 2 and returned to Our Lady of Lourdes hospital to be a patient advocate before coming to the Motherhouse. Vicki, as you can see, was never idle and ministered with a moderate deliberate pace.

Vicki was also an excellent seamstress. I remember her making, with her dear friend, Poverello, more than 200 aprons for Chapter 2000. They had an assembly line between the two of them. Probably one of the shortest assembly lines in the world. She was a published author, an editor, (she did not like semi colons) a word smith, using the exact meaning for each word, a chef who prepared delicious dinners, especially an Italian meal for her good, long term friend Pat Reid on her birthdays. She was a story teller par excellence, even if she laughed in the middle of the recitation delaying telling us the end of the story. Every morning at breakfast she would fill us in and give her opinion on National and Global news.

Vicki believed in relationships. She kept in touch with friends by phone, email, texts, letters and cards. Actually, several friends told me they got an Easter card on Tuesday, the day after she died. She remembered birthdays, anniversaries, events in others’ lives. Her memory was superb. If anyone could not remember a name, a place, or an event, we would say to them, “Ask Vicki”. She meant so much to so many people and so many people meant so much to her. She had a certain humility about her and definitely a presence.

The news of Vicki’s death was stunning. All of us were aware of Vicki’s Crohns disease that she lived with for many years. It really never stopped her, although a few times, she was seriously sidetracked, from living life to the fullest.

In the last few years and especially this last year, she did slow down. It was a process of letting go. She had to let go of her sewing, her writing, her cooking, her driving and so much more. She acknowledged that she was getting slower and her stature was shorter and that it took more energy to go place to place. She told me that it was too late to improve her outer beauty so she thought she would work on her inner beauty. She did spend more time in her room being quiet and reflective. She, as we know, already had inner beauty.

A few days after her death, all I could do was be grateful that her letting go was peacefully complete. No more suffering, no more worrying, no more rising to the occasion.

The experience of Holy Week was very different and personal for me this year. As we celebrated the life, death and resurrection of Jesus, we also experienced the life, death and resurrection of Vicki.

Vicki chose the readings for today’s liturgy. I ask that you be especially attentive to them as they are Vicki’s gift to us. The first reading is about the Messianic banquet, the second is that we shall see God as God is and the third reading is “I am the way, the truth and the life. I am going now to prepare a place for you”. This gift from Vicki exemplifies her deep faith and her desire that we all look forward to this same experience.

Vicki definitely had a Franciscan heart and loved being a Franciscan Sister of Allegany, exemplifying values of joy, simplicity and being at home with all people. She was faithful in living the Rule of the Third Order Regular of St. Francis, that is, to live the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ, living in obedience, in poverty and in chastity in her time and in her place.

As we approach the table of Eucharist, the table of thanksgiving, we remember our friend and our sister with love and gratitude. Her presence made a difference in our lives and in the lives of the people she ministered to and with. May the memory of Vicki live on in our hearts!