

**Reflection at the Welcoming Home to Ohio Dominican University
for Sr. Mary Andrew Matesich, OP**

June 20, 2005

by Sr. Catherine Colby, OP

Reading: Romans 6:3-4, 8-9

A reading from the letter of Paul to the Romans.

Do you know that all of us who have been baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into his death? Therefore we have been buried with him by baptism into death, so that, just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, so we too might walk in the newness of life.

If, then we have died with Christ, we believe that we will also live with him. We know that Christ, raised from the dead, dies no more. Death no longer has power.

The Word of the Lord.

“... just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, so she too walks in newness of life...for death no longer has power over her.”

The words of scripture fill us with hope in this time of deep loss as we gather to welcome our sister, colleague and friend back to the sacred space of Ohio Dominican's house of prayer and Eucharistic presence. It was here that Sr. Mary Andrew first reached out to this community asking for prayers and support as she moved forward on a courageous journey of battling cancer. It was in this place that so many times she prayed and celebrated with her Ohio Dominican community of sisters, colleagues, students, family and friends. How fitting it is to honor her here once again.

This St. Mary of the Springs Dominican lived life to the fullest. Her ability to embrace a vocation devoted to Christ that reflected the life, death and resurrection of Jesus was the source of grace and energy that permeated who she was and all that she did. Her own words attest to that commitment.

In the Christmas of 2001, Mary Andrew created a small booklet of pictures, prayers and reflections that she distributed as gifts to the sisters living with her in the Sansbury Hall community. In it she wrote “Niagara Falls has been a special place for me at least since 1977. That summer I spent several weeks in Toronto on a mini-sabbatical, I was preparing myself for a difficult year; one in which I would have to decide whether to apply for the presidency of ODC. I also had to guide the college through a challenging accreditation review. One weekend, Joan Franks and I took a bus ride to Niagara. We sat high above the Canadian Falls watching the water hurl itself over the brink. Suddenly I realized that the dizzying drop did not destroy the water. Abandonment to the force of gravity did not pull apart the molecules of H₂O. Abandoning myself to God's call would not pull me apart, either.”

In her lifetime, Sr. Mary Andrew modeled an abandonment to God's call that enriched the life of others. This multi-talented woman of the Word lived out her baptismal commitment by sharing her God given gifts of intelligence, vision, creativity and compassion for the poor and suffering. She did this with a unique energy and devotion that was grace-filled and admirable.

In our sorrow at the loss of her physical presence in our midst, we rejoice today, knowing that the God she praised, blessed and preached during her time here on earth, has welcomed her into His embrace with the Words, “Well done good and faithful servant, enter into the joy of your beloved for all eternity.”