Reflections for the Wake Service for Sister Victoria Marconi, OSB
November 7, 2020
By Prioress, Sister Judith Murphy, OSB
Wisdom 3:1-6,8; Philippians 4:8-9; John 6: 37-40

By 2013 Sister Victoria had lived a long and full monastic life in St. Mary PA. She had taught many children, predominantly first grade children, and “planted the seeds of faith” in them. After she retired from teaching the little ones, she created a program for adults, called “Lunch with the Lord.” Monthly, this program welcomed a speaker and then those who came to listen enjoyed lunch together. This audience was older than the primary grade children. Yet it seems that Sister Victoria’s aim was similar: to share her faith and hope and love with people. To help them to grow in their faith in our loving and merciful God. Many of her former students, whether first graders or the Lunch with the Lord adults, kept in touch with Sister Victoria. She welcomed hearing about their hopes and dreams, and troubles and challenges. And, as we came to know, she communicated with a very impressive number of people, still nurturing in them this faith and hope in our loving God.

Then, in 2013, when St. Joseph Monastery in St Mary’s, PA was closing, Sister Victoria followed her friend Sister Mariella and asked to come to St. Scholastica Monastery in Chicago, which she did in 2014. Now, to many of us it seems she has lived a long and full monastic life here at St. Scholastica, as well. She joined in, she let herself be known and she wanted to know us too.

The funeral director in St. Mary’s was given Sister Victoria’s wishes for Scripture readings for her funeral. Sister Victoria had entrusted them to her sister Mary Louise, because the two of them had agreed about Sister Victoria going back to St. Mary’s for her funeral and burial. We used those readings in this wake service today. As I read and heard them again today, I feel it is a true thing that Sr. Victoria also taught the truths in these readings to her students, whether little children or adults. She dealt with people in a way that they could know the safety of being in the hands of God—because that was a core belief that she taught by how she lived, even beyond the words. So too with Paul’s teaching to the Philippians: Fill your minds with
everything that is true, everything that is noble, everything that is good, everything that is thought virtuous or worthy of praise. Do these things and the God of peace will be with you. So too, she knew her Lord Jesus to be the human face of God. In our gospel selection we hear Jesus say: All that the father gives to me I will raise up on the last day. I believe Victoria was steeped in these understandings from years of meditating on Jesus the human face of God and the words that he spoke and the words that have been spoken of him throughout the Christian era.

Her wish was that there not be a eulogy at her funeral, but that it would be OK to *say* that death means getting to see God face to face.

We are grateful to have had Sister Victoria live this message among our community. May she now be experiencing even more deeply the fulness of faith, hope, and love---at one with her loving and merciful God.