

In Memory of Sr. Maria Guadalupe Cornejo

~ composed by Sr. Rosanne McDonald ~

(Maria Carmen Cornejo)

December 21, 1916 – January 9, 2012

Maria Carmen Cornejo came into this world in the city of Morelia, capitol of the state of Michoacan, in Mexico. The city was founded in 1541. The city has a long history of religious men and women living there since the beginning of the city. Her parents Antonio Cornejo and Gabina (Medina) Cornejo immigrated to the US.



In the 1940's Maria Carmen worked in the J.C. Penny's department store on Baker Street in East Bakersfield. In Sr. Mary Electa's reflection at the wake service, she told of a contest that Maria Carmen was involved in at J.C. Penny. The store had a contest among all of its salespersons to see who would sell the most blankets during their *Blanket Bonanza*. There were almost 70 stores competing in the contest. As a saleswoman in the bedding department she decided to notify the parishioners of Our Lady of Guadalupe Church of the special sale. She sent post cards to each person or family on the mailing list to come to the *Blanket Bonanza* and to see Carmen. She set the record in sales during this campaign. Soon the work, parties, dances lost their luster. She felt drawn to be and do more with her life. She entered our congregation on Sept. 5, 1948, professed her first vows May 18, 1950, and final vows on August 27, 1955. Her great love of Our Lady and for her Mexican heritage left a mark on all she met in this life. Known in religious life as Sr. Maria Guadalupe, her happy smile, and bright shiny eyes drew all towards her. She, in turn, drew them closer to Mary and to her Son, Jesus.

Maria Guadalupe was a determined religious in the best sense of the word. She observed what was going on around her, judged what was needed to better the lives of the poor, the needy and ill. She then acted by calling others to join her in reaching out to practice the Beatitudes in their daily lives. Along the way she taught thousands to pray and trust in the Providence of God. Her Atonement missionary spirit was forever with her as she lived each day even in her very last days. May she continue to pray for us as she takes her place in heaven.



***An excerpt from the “Homily at the funeral Mass”
for Sr. Maria Guadalupe – by Fr. Bill Drobach, SA***

January 13, 2012

“**Sr. Maria Guadalupe**, from the first time I met her, exuded that happiness to me, by way of her serene smile. I never saw her without it. It was a wonderful face ... Many years ago there was a movie named, “Funny Face” with Fred Astaire and Audrey Hepburn ... In that movie, Fred Astaire sings a song called, “That Face: ‘That face, that face, that wonderful face; It shines it glows, all over the place. But never will these eyes behold, a sight that could replace, *that face, that face, that wonderful face!*’

Maria Guadalupe, I will never forget you! You will often be in my thoughts and always in my heart. And I will never forget that wonderful face!”



***Memories of Sr. Maria Guadalupe
from her SA Sisters in California***

“We were trying to remember some of the tall stories that **Sr. Maria Guadalupe** loved to tell. Home visiting in Delano one day, a man was painting his house and taking a long time. She commented on the long time it was taking him. He said he was, “... keeping time to the music while he was brushing.” She said, “Well, instead of playing ‘Amapola,’ put on the ‘March of Zacatecas’ and you will be finished in a few minutes!”

The convent was located in the poor section of Delano; on the corner of the street a few blocks from the church. Often, persons stopped at the church asking for something to eat. Sr. Maria Guadalupe began making a large pot of beans at the convent and serving bowls of hot beans to the poor, hungry persons. She talked with them and fed them. We don't know how many times a week she did that[all] remembered her as a strong, determined Sister who observed, judged and acted. She taught those whom she gathered, to pray ... now, they are asking her to pray for them. So are we.

May she rest in peace.

