

A LIFE REMEMBERED

Sister Monica Orange, FMDM

24 July 1934 — 4 November 2016

On 22nd November 2016, FMDM Sisters, Monica's brother Peter and his wife Ellie, other family members gathered in Ladywell Chapel for the Requiem Mass for Monica. Fr John Sneddon from the Benedictine community at Chilworth was the celebrant.

We remember Paddy, Monica's sister in America and other members of her family were unable to be present.

We honour and give thanks give thanks for the richness and the beauty of Monica's life, a life given for others in love and in Franciscan joy. We are united in our love for Monica and in our loss. We pray that Monica is now living in total joy in God's light.

Sister Monica Orange FMDM

24th July 1934 - 4th November 2016



We give thanks for Monica's gentle presence, for her warmth and courage; all of which have left their unique mark and memory on each of our hearts.

EULOGY by Sister Shirley Mills, FMDM

"I have called you by name you are mine
Should you pass through the sea I will be with you
Or through rivers they will not swallow you up
Should you walk through fire you will not be scorched
And the flames will not burn you
For I am Yahweh your God"
Isaiah 43: 2-3

God called Monica by name and she answered this call of love in many ways. One of these ways was as a Franciscan, an FMDM and in this initial call she answered many other calls.

Monica, like Mary, listened to God's invitation and her reply like Mary's was "Behold the handmaid of the Lord, be it done unto me according to your word". Totally in tune with our Franciscan Charism, Monica conceived and brought forth the Word, into her own life and into those of her sisters and brothers and of the many people she met during her lifetime.

Monica was through and through a Franciscan and like Francis, loved Lady Poverty. First and foremost she was Sister to all, to her own family, to her Sisters in our congregation, to the poor and suffering, in fact to all whom she met especially those in need.



Monica was in love with creation, with the earth, Bother Sun and Sister Moon, Sister Water and Brother Fire, stars, wind and rain; all were sister and brother to her.

She had a special love of animals, particularly dogs and cats and more so if they were injured or had been ill-treated.

During her early days in Zambia although Monica did not pass through the sea as in the quote from Isaiah she was indeed swallowed up by the Zambezi River! This, not once, but twice when the land rover she was driving slipped off the pontoon, and there were crocodiles! Then in later years, when driving through a Lusaka compound Monica did not walk through actual fire but she did experience being shot in the leg by a robber.

In both these incidents as throughout her life as an FMDM Monica responded with the strength of love, gentleness, acceptance and patience. It was with this strength that Monica was able to inspire others whom God had placed in her way, be they postulants and novices here in Ladywell or in Africa, or indeed the many needy and suffering people whom Monica befriended.

During her last illness very bravely born I feel sure that God increased in her the gifts of gentleness, patience and acceptance and as her body weakened so her longing to be alone and at one with her God only increased.



In his book 'The inner voice of Love' Henri J.M. Nouwen writes;

“Do not hesitate to love and to love deeply, the more you have loved and have allowed yourself to suffer because of your love the more you will be able to let your heart grow wider and deeper”.

Monica suffered deeply and loved deeply throughout her life and her heart did grow wider and deeper with and in God's love.

Many years ago Monica drew and painted **A Honey Bird** and wrote on it these words from **“A tree full of Angels’** perhaps Monica's most favourite book.

It is a terrible grace, an awesome gift
But terrifying all the same
There is no way to get there except to lose, yourself
To lose what you know of yourself
And then the battle is over
There will be nothing left but God

Being alone; all one with God
A terrible and beautiful grace
The only way there is to lose your self

Beautiful because when you lose yourself
There is no one left but God.

You are all alone, all one with your God Monica!

Monica may you now rest totally at One and lost in the love of your One God.

