

SISTER CORINE GERARD

(July 4, 1922 - October 1964)

Sister Corine Gerard (Viola Mazzei) was born on July 4, 1922, in Boontown, New Jersey, where she was reared under the protective guidance of her parents according to the norms of their Lutheran faith.

After her formal education through grade and secondary schools, she entered the business world, while at home she assumed the responsibility of caring for her aged parents. God blessed her particular selflessness with His special graces and on February 26, 1951, Viola was received into the Church. Soon afterwards she became an active member of the Daughters of Mary and her active participation in this group brought her into contact with the Sisters of St. John the Baptist at Mt. St. John Academy, Gladstone, N.J. After a few meetings with the Sisters, Viola soon began to envision herself as one among them. She placed herself under the guidance of a spiritual director who helped her to perceive the hand of God in a very particular way directing the steps of her salvation. Applying herself diligently to his wise and prudent counsel, she grew in grace and holy resignation to give herself completely to God as a religious. Both her parents, to whom she had been so devoted, had since passed away, and on December 8, 1957, Viola was admitted to the Postulate of the Sisters of St. John the Baptist at St. John Villa Academy. She was assigned as a kindergarten teacher there that year, and spent herself daily with joy and enthusiasm among her "little ones". Truly, she found it very difficult to leave them when, in 1959, she was to leave for the Novitiate. However, greater joys were awaiting her during this blessed year of intimate growth in love for her Divine Spouse. Her desires were more firmly rooted to serve Him in His Mystical Body as an instrument, which would bring His tender love to the "holy innocents" entrusted to her care.

On December 9, 1960, Sister Corine Gerard pronounced her first vows at the Novitiate Chapel in Glen Cove, N.Y., and was then assigned to St. John Villa Academy, where she resumed her position as kindergarten teacher. She served faithfully in this capacity during the few remaining years of her life.

In March 1964, a cancer, from which she had been suffering, showed its malignancy. The course of this raging disease was soon evident, and on May 2, 1964, Sister Corine Gerard was permitted to pronounce her perpetual vows.

Intense suffering of her entire body was endured during the remaining five months of her earthly life. Then, on the morning of October 2, 1964, First Friday of the month and Feast of the Guardian Angels, Sister Corine Gerard peacefully rendered her soul to Her Divine Spouse, joining Him in the Eternal Nuptials of His Blessed Eternity.

MAY SHE REST IN PEACE!