

"The Lourdes of America"
October 1995

Dear Pilgrims of Our Lady,

4:44 A.M. August 3rd, 1995: It is as if Our Lady and Jesus said, "Veronica, come sit with us now; your mission on earth—Our voice box for 25 years—has now been completed. It is finished! You have served Us well. Your loved ones will understand—you have served them so very well." And so at that very moment, Veronica went over the veil.

Yes, Veronica, Jesus, and Mary, we are trying to understand, but we are still mere earthly humans and Veronica, we all miss you so very much—your beauty, your charm, your sweetness, your words of wisdom. Although we know that you are in Heaven, we shall mourn and grieve over your absence from our earthly environment for some time to come—putting into plain words, we miss you so very much.

Veronica's pain and suffering was awesome for the past seven months. We may never really know just how awesome it was because she hardly ever complained. But one could see it in her face at times, and she lost so much weight. She had five hours of major surgery this past January in a nearby University hospital where she



Veronica
Sept. 1945

had a benign tumor removed from a nerve on her spine by a neurosurgeon. In addition, during her 40-day hospitalization there, she also had a heart attack. She should have had heart surgery then. However, at a conference there among the top cardiologists (this hospital ranks one of the best in cardiology) they ruled out this operation due to Veronica's age and because of her past heart history—she had an angina in 1978—the risk was too great.



Arthur Lueken
June 1995

This past June 6th, she had her right kidney removed due to a malignant tumor. It was surprising that her heart was strong enough for this two hour surgery. Before this surgery, her cardiologists gave her a stress test which she satisfactorily passed. However, her remaining kidney, also, had a history of not being the best. She was back and forth to local hospitals three or four times with kidney and bladder problems before her last hospitalization on July 31st.

On July 31st, she was again admitted with no blood pressure, defective kidney, touch of pneumonia, and a 105.3 temperature due to infected blood (uremic poisoning). With today's heart medications, the blood pressure was stabilized within a day. During my last two-hour visit with her in the intensive care unit the night before she died, she had become like water-logged. The skin on her hand was about an inch and a half higher than normal. I could just see that this great lady couldn't go much further, and I prayed several Rosaries there holding her hand at times. I also made sure she was wearing her Scapular, as I always did when visiting her in the hospital. A priest visited with Veronica three times during this hospitalization.

We here in Veronica's home did everything possible for her. We had certified nurses' aides at her bedside daily, 8 A.M. to 10 P.M. and later if need be. A registered nurse from the nursing sisters visited with Veronica once or twice a

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week. During Veronica's two July hospitalizations, these aides were at her bedside. We were on the phones with her doctors on a regular basis—often picking up new prescriptions. We had a hospital bed for her, almost like a hospital room in her home. We prayed many Rosaries at her bedside—the same as so many of you all did, in your groups, in your homes, and your churches, for which we, the family, thank you. We also thank you for the many, many get well Mass cards you sent during the last seven months before Veronica was called to Heaven—my sweetheart, my lovely, beautiful wife of 49 years and 9 months and mother of my five (four living) children.

Labor Day weekend, 1945, Veronica and I met at the skating rink, which is about 500 yards from where the exedra is now located. After the War ended with Germany, the 110 foot submarine chaser I served on, which did convoy duty on the Gulf of Mexico for two and a half years, was transferred to the Flushing Yacht Basin where we trained midshipmen for Columbia University. This basin is about a mile from the skating rink.

For the past several years, Veronica always said to me, Ann Ferguson, and Michael—perhaps many of you heard her say, "If anything should ever happen to me, the work, Our Lady's Mission through Our Lady of the Roses, Mary Help of Mothers Shrine must continue."

We all know that for 25 years it was Our Lady's pilgrims with their fervent prayers, their intense love, their devotions, their generous financial support, their sacrifices for Our Lady and Jesus that made Our Lady of the Roses, Mary Help of Mothers Shrine succeed, triumphant over adversaries. Our Lady's pilgrims, all who received Her messages through Veronica, found spiritual comfort, guidance, family members returning to the faith, cures and conversions, and so without doubt they want the Mission begun by Our Lady and you, Veronica, to continue.

Yes, Veronica, we here, Our Lady's 13 full-time workers, the part-timers, Ann, myself and all of us will keep doing Our Lady's work just the same as we have for 25 years and for which you trained us so well. There will be no changes. "Your labors must not cease while you are upon the earth" (Our Lord, March 18, 1976).

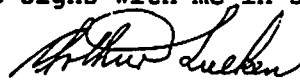
As you told so many of us, "Even when I'm not at the vigils, Our Lady and Jesus are always there," and we know that from now on you, too, will be there in spirit. And surely we all agree that henceforth Our Lady's vigil calendars will have a vigil on your anniversary, August 3rd, in your honor.

Undoubtedly, your mail box is bombarded daily, the same as ours is on Long Island by various organizations requesting funds, some almost monthly. We here at Our Lady of the Roses haven't mailed such a letter in one year, to which all of you responded most generously and for which we again thank you. We do mention our need for funds when mailing Rose Notes to you, to which you also respond generously, and we thank you for that too. We take great pride in our thriftiness, but even at that, Our Lady's coffers are very low. We are in vital need of operating funds. The need is great, your support is needed now. Please be as generous as your heart and responsibilities allow—\$15, \$25, \$50, \$100, \$500 or more.

Remembering Veronica—let us pray.

Sincerely yours in Jesus and Mary,

For Veronica
who signs with me in spirit,



Arthur Lueken

P.S. For your convenience, you can call toll free 1-800-OF-THE-ROSES
(1-800-638-4376) and use your Visa or Mastercard to make your gift.
