



*There is a Being who is Love
and who wishes that we live
in communion with Him.*

Bl. Elizabeth of the Trinity



Sister Christine of Mary, O.C.D.

Born: September 5, 1963

Entered Carmel: June 18, 1992

Solemn Profession of Vows: June 13, 1998

Entered Eternal Life: January 08, 2013

** Each Carmelite Nun is given a quote as a motto when she enters Carmel.
The quote above was given to Sr. Christine when she entered Carmel in 1992.*

Sister Christine of Mary (aka: Cong Tang Ton Nu Thanh Lieu Christine) was born on September 5, 1963 in Da Lat, Viet Nam. She is the 7th child in a family of 8 children, 3 girls and 5 boys. In 1975, Sister and her family emigrated from Viet Nam to America to escape the communist regime, leaving behind "...the dog [she] loved so much" and many beautiful childhood memories. Her family settled in San Francisco, where she completed her high school education. During her first few months in America, Sister Christine learned English from watching Star Trek on T.V. Blessed with the gift of language, she also spoke French, Japanese and Spanish, in addition to Vietnamese, her native tongue. In college, Sister Christine attended San Francisco State University and Waseda University and graduated with a Bachelor of Arts in International Relations. Thereafter, Sister worked as a counselor in charge of disabled youth in the Rehabilitation Program for the State of California in Covina.

Sister Christine had always believed that Our Lord was preparing her to give her life over to Him since she was six years old. Over the years, she felt God's call periodically and these powerful stirrings deepened her love for God. When Sister Christine was in Tokyo, Japan as an international exchange student, she went to a monastery and felt drawn to follow God's call. So much at peace with the silence, solitude and prayerful atmosphere there, she felt as if she never wanted to leave this place.

Upon returning to the States, Sister Christine took up Scripture reading and eventually, her vocation came to her in perfect clarity. At that moment, she knew that God was calling her to the contemplative life in a cloister. Despite the fact that she would have to explain her decision to her loved ones, Sister Christine remained steadfast and overjoyed inside. She began searching for cloistered religious communities and after visiting many wonderful monasteries, she came across a brochure from the Alhambra Carmelite Monastery. Sister Christine then contacted Mother Maria, the prioress at the time, for an informative interview. Once Sister Christine visited the monastery, she realized that this was the very place she had envisioned throughout her years of discerning.

On the Solemnity of the Sacred Heart of Jesus, June 18, 1992, Sister Christine entered Carmel and received the habit a year later with the name Sister Christine of Mary. Sister made her Solemn Profession of Vows on the Vigil of Corpus Christi, June 13, 1998. She was the cook for the community for five years and utilized her culinary talent to serve the Sisters with love and joy. In the last twelve years of her life, Sister Christine dedicated herself to the Altar Bread office. She was responsible for packaging and shipping communion hosts to parishes. She was always reliable in her work and helped maintain the community's primary source of income.

Sister Christine lived a very full life. She had a kind and caring personality, always giving the sweetest smile to everyone that she encountered. She had a unique way of making others feel at ease in whatever circumstance they may be in. Sister Christine also had a special love for animals. She cared for the community's two German Shepherds, running laps and playing fetch with them every day. She also had a bearded dragon lizard, whom she named "Mitty."

Late in summer 2012, Sister Christine started to feel some symptoms of her illness. After going through many medical tests, Sister was diagnosed with stage IV lung cancer. About a month after the diagnosis, she underwent surgery to relieve the pressure in her brain that was affecting her vision. Unfortunately, the cancer had spread aggressively following the procedure. Sister Christine decided against further treatments, wanting to spend her last days in peace.

On January 8th, 2013, Our Lord called Sister Christine to His Eternal Embrace at 6:00 in the morning; and she went peacefully to Him.

Sister Christine is very much loved and missed by the many people that know her. She is survived by her parents, two sisters: Ha-Tien and Jennifer, five brothers: Dan, Joe, Andy, Michael and Tuan, her beloved uncle Louis, and her Carmelite Sisters in Alhambra.