



LET US CELEBRATE

NOELA'S LIFE

JOYFULLY IN THE

EUCCHARIST

Our Lady's Church
Bedford Road, Ringwood

Monday, 16th April, 1984
Requiem Mass 10 a.m.

N O E L A

Kathleen Noela MOTUM was born in Sydney on 4th February 1936 to working class parents. The early failure of their marriage required Noela to shoulder responsibility beyond her tender years, and to take a special role in the rearing and education of Colin, the youngest of the three children.

Noela was academically gifted: at age 15 she won a Commonwealth Scholarship and Exhibition to the University of Sydney. Barely 16 when her freshman year began, she used the first two years of her degree to catch up socially. To her friends she was 'Kate' or 'Katie'. She graduated B.A. in 1955 and Dip. Ed. in 1956, at the end of which year she signed up for work in Indonesia under Herb Feith's Volunteer Graduate (VG) Scheme. Not having studied geography, and with very little native instinct for the topic, she had not, at that time, the foggiest idea of where that country was situated. Having no

Indonesian, and only the vaguest (typically Indonesian) instructions concerning where and to whom she should report for work, Noela and her co-worker Joan Minogue (later Hardjono) got into some hair-raising escapades. One of the more amusing is described in Ivan Southall's Indonesia Face-to-Face (Melbourne: Lansdowne Press, 1963). During her two year stay in Java Noela managed to meet the reigning President (Soekarno) and his future replacement (Suharto). Such high connections were accidental. Mostly she and Joan were working three jobs, on Indonesian pay-scales, and struggling to eat. Her main civil service job was to give instruction in 'English as a Foreign Language' at the Teachers' College in Semarang, north central Java. Although she learnt Indonesian, she did not let her students know this, since the aim of the exercise was to make them self-sufficient in English.

On returning to Australia Noela worked as a secondary teacher and a librarian (gaining a

qualification in the latter field in 1960). Two days before her birthday in February, 1961, Noela married Alan Powell, whom she had met at a Newman Society Fresher camp early in 1955. At the time Alan had an incomplete Ph.D, reasonable prospects, and an overdraft floated to buy the engagement ring. Ill-health dogged Noela in the early years of her marriage, especially during pregnancy. Michelle and Gerard were born in Adelaide where Alan held his first lecturing job. With these two still in nappies, the family left for Chicago in January 1964, where Alan spent his post-doctoral year. The return trip to Australia via Ireland nearly put an end to Noela (and David, then in utero). Noela became seriously ill, and was off-loaded from the 'Orcades' in Aden, in the middle of a civil war. The family is eternally grateful to Air India, who flew her out of Aden when 7 months pregnant. David was born in March 1965 as Alan took up his new job at Monash.

The ensuing few years for Noela were mainly about keeping a spotless, efficient, but

loving home, in the midst of a mountain of nappies (Damian was born in 1967). Realizing that her teaching skills were largely unused, she volunteered for work with the Confraternity of Christian Doctrine (CCD) in the Jordanville parish. After the family's move to Heathmont in December 1969, Noela continued voluntary work as a Catechist until the family departed for Washington D.C. in September 1971, where Alan worked until January 1973. In the U.S. Noela continued her CCD work with the Catholic Community of Reston, Virginia. In 1972 she attended the New England Congress of Religious Educators at the University of Massachusetts.

When she got back home in 1973 Noela was delighted, but stunned, to be offered a position by Fr John O'Shea (then Parish Priest of Ringwood) as a professional co-ordinator for the CCD programme in Our Lady's Parish. The bonds that Noela had built up with the large volunteer circle of catechists before she went to America were just as strong when she came home. In Ringwood she never lacked support, and was

deeply appreciative of the energy, care, and loyalty to her, expended by so many. Mary Dacy and Doreen Tierney became, over the years, her closest friends.

While rearing four children, running a home, caring for a not-too-easily pleased husband (who once invited a congress of 100 people to dinner at home!), and building up what became justly famous as the most outstanding CCD programme in Melbourne, Noela used her 'spare' time to earn a Bachelor's Degree in Theology. These part-time studies took seven years -- when she graduated in May 1983, Noela was known, respected, and loved, by several generations of students and former students at YTU (Yarra Theological Union). Her grades were uniformly good -- all credits and distinctions.

By the middle of 1982 Noela knew that it was time for a change and that she should quit as Co-ordinator. Towards the end of that year she became vaguely uneasy about her health, but diagnosis took several months. She learned the

bad news on the Friday following the Ash Wednesday conflagration, having undergone major surgery on the Thursday. In the five ensuing weeks (1½ of them in intensive care), on only two days did her spirits flag. She was regarded as a phenomenon by the medical personnel who treated her. A year later in March 1983, after Noela had undergone a second major bout of surgery, the senior physician looking after her commented to Alan:

"Her spirit is really wonderful -- she has helped me a lot, not only to help her, but to help my other patients."

The thirteen months commencing March 1983 were Noela's greatest trial. Chemotherapy held special horrors for her (associated with her earlier illness). Nevertheless, she took up a newly created position in the Catholic Education Office (CEO) during the period May 1983 - February 1984. Her gradually deteriorating health required her to work continually fewer

hours per week. The Director and staff of the CEO were wonderfully supportive of Noela, both in encouraging her to persevere with the new job after her prognosis was known, and in making special arrangements to allow her to work as her physical and emotional resources permitted. The job was especially valuable for Noela during this crisis year for two reasons: first, it took the cause of the CCD, always closest to her heart, to a new level of recognition in the Archdiocese; second, it enabled her to contribute to the support of the family at a time when her health ruled out housework.

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Her parents, her brothers, her husband and children are grateful to have been touched by her love. She is an exceptional spirit.

*Noela died in St. Andrew's Hospital
on Wednesday, 11th April, 1984
at 10.05 a.m.
Alan and Gerard were with her.*

ENTRANCE HYMN: *COME BACK TO ME*

FIRST READING: Wisdom 4: 7-15

"Alive or dead, we belong to the Lord"

RESPONSIBLE PSALM

YAHWEH, I KNOW YOU ARE NEAR

SECOND READING: Romans 14: 7-12

ALLELUIA VERSE

ALLELUIA, ALLELUIA

*Come, you whom my Father has blessed,
says the Lord, inherit the kingdom
prepared for you since the foundation
of the world.*

ALLELUIA

GOSPEL: Luke 24: 13-16 28-35

"I AM THE RESURRECTION AND THE LIFE".

PRAYERS OF THE FAITHFUL

PRIEST

*Let us pray with faith and confidence
to God our Father who raised His Son,
Jesus Christ, from death:*

LEADER: *May your love surround our Holy Father,
Pope John Paul, our Bishops and our Priests.*

*LORD HEAR US
R. LORD, HEAR OUR PRAYER.*

LEADER: *Bring your daughter Noela, who has died
in your peace, to the fullness of joy
in your presence forever.*

*LORD HEAR US
R. LORD, HEAR OUR PRAYER.*

LEADER: *We thank you for the life of Noela, for her
love, her faith, her courage and her
fidelity. May these gifts live on in
her family.*

*LORD HEAR US
R. LORD, HEAR OUR PRAYER.*

LEADER: *Today Lord, we pray for Noela's husband
Alan, for her children - Michelle, Gerard,
David and Damian; for her father and mother,
for her brothers Graham and Colin, and for
all who will miss her. Comfort them in their
sorrow and fill them with your peace.*

*LORD HEAR US
R. LORD, HEAR OUR PRAYER.*

PRIEST: *Lord, hear our prayers, and be merciful to
your daughter Noela whom you have called
from this life. Welcome her into the company
of the saints. We ask this through Christ
our Lord. AMEN*

OFFERTORY HYMN: *IN BREAD WE BRING YOU LORD ...*

LORD'S PRAYER: (Sung)

COMMUNION *The Lord is my Shepherd
Be not afraid*

FINAL PRAYER

- V. *Saints of God, come to her aid!
Come to meet her angels of the Lord!*
- R. *Receive her soul and present her to
God the most high.*
- V. *May Christ who called you take you to
himself; may angels lead you to
Abraham's side.*
- R. *Receive her soul and present her to
God the most high.*
- V. *Give her eternal rest, O Lord, and
may your light shine on her forever.*
- R. *Receive her soul and present her to
God the most high.*

RECESSIONAL HYMN

THOUGH THE MOUNTAINS MAY FALL

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