

**Letter written by Sr. Ellen Jean Klein to her parents back home.  
At the time of Typhoon Karen, Sr. Ellen Jean was living in the Aspiranture convent.**



Sr. Ellen Jean Klein

"Nov. 15, 1962

Dear Mom and Dad,

Praised be Jesus Christ!

What more is there to say! You can't imagine the destruction there is all around us. It's worse than any of the war pictures I have ever seen. When we ride through the village, I get tears everytime. The people have nothing, absolutely nothing.

I'll go back briefly to the beginning – more details later (much later, we're so busy!!!) The typhoon started Sunday during the day with winds and rain. [Written between lines: Electricity went off at 3:45 p.m.] We followed our regular Sunday schedule and "secured" parts of our house. We came over to the convent quonset from Asp. [Aspiranture] building at 7:15 p.m. for a nameday party for Sr. Martinus. We noticed excessive rain coming in our lavatory so we went to fix it. S.M. Carolyn was up on a ladder pounding when all of a sudden the roof blew off that part of the house and her veil. With a kerosene lamp we dashed for the Blessed Sacrament and ran over to the Asp. building. The rest was a nightmare. The 23 of us went from room to room as the roof blew off, windows crashed and rain came down. We ended up in a narrow corridor crouched between mattresses and wet blankets free from flying glass for 6-8 hours. It was awful, how we prayed!!! The winds died down about 5-6 in the morning. When we looked out, our convent quonset was completely destroyed, walls down, no roof and utter destruction. The Asp. building has 4-5 big holes in the roof which got everything on the top floor wet, blown around and well, just a mess! All windows were broken and everything wet on bottom floor.

About 10:00 Mon. morning we took some bare essentials and are now living in St. Francis Convent (we 23 and 25 of them). The Candidates and Asp.'s are living, eating, sleeping in the Sister community room. We are doubled up with the Sisters 2 or 3 in a room because part of their roof came off too. Their chapel and six bedrooms are roofless and water comes in like a deluge when it rains. Thanks be to God these 3 days Tues, Wed, Thurs have been beautiful sun shiny days. It has made it possible to salvage a lot of things. Rain would have ruined everything.

Mon. we were too dazed to do anything, slept a few hours. Tues, Wed, Thurs we've been cleaning up and salvaging at our house. Essentials we bring to St. Francis and others we're storing in dry places in Asp. building. Our house is completely no good, can't be rebuilt. This salvaging is a messy, dirty, discouraging job. We have no running water or electricity. Water was promised us today, but so far hasn't come. We have to carry all our water from reserve tanks. Lucky, the Asp has 2 reserve tanks and we're Using it for clothes washing by hand. You can imagine our white habits! Our wimple has been re-designed – no starch, no ironing. They tell us no electricity for 60 days. You can see why when you see..."

[remainder of letter not found]