

## IN MEMORIAM



# Sr. Helen Theresa Fleischman

BORN: October 1929

ENTERED CONGREGATION: JUNE 22, 1946

DIED: March 17, 2013

**O**N the occasion of her 50th Anniversary as a Sister of the Precious Blood, Sister Helen Theresa Fleischman told us, "Every morning when I go to chapel I greet the dear Lord with 'Good morning, my Love, my Dove, my Beautiful One!' and He smiles at me."

No doubt this happy, dedicated and charitable Sister drew much of her strength and generosity from her time in prayer with Jesus. In her retirement she was able to spend much more time before the Eucharist and in her heart in prayer. Recently she told us she prays four hours each day. While we are sure many of those hours of prayers were spent in sleep, we're sure Jesus accepted this natural slumber as intentional time with Him.

Her time in prayer extended to those she served — bringing the love of God to all she met.

In 1946 at the age of 16, Helen Theresa, after being taught eight years by the wonderful Sisters of the Precious Blood and having grown up in a very religious family, followed her sister Genevieve (also known as Sister M. Aubert) into the family of the Sisters of the Precious Blood.

Helen Theresa was the second youngest of six children born to Louis and Odillia Fleischman in St. Joseph, Missouri. Upon investiture as a novice, she

received the name in religion, Sister Mary Thomasine, for which she was known until 1967 when, like so many in her CPPS family, she returned to using her baptismal name.

At her 60th Anniversary, Sister described her life as full of a "lot of little bits of heaven!" This woman who joyfully lived religious life for 66 years began her ministry as a culinary artist and housekeeper in Bishop Rehring's parish at St. Mary's Hyde Park in Cincinnati. This particular ministry was very meaningful to Sister as she experienced there the spirit of deep love for God and was inspired by the people.

For a total of 62 years Helen Theresa served in Cincinnati, Toledo and Marquette, Michigan. "My whole cooking life," exclaimed Sister, "was made absolutely heavenly by my being privileged to cook for Archbishop Alter, Cardinal Shocka, Cardinal Bernadine...." and on one special occasion for Bishop Sheen. The priest recipients of her ministry named her Sr. H.T. — Sister Holy Terror. "I guess," said Helen Theresa, "that means that a playful spirit goes along with my quiet nature."

Sister H.T. had always enjoyed her various community living situations. "When I think of my life in community," said Sister, "it has been a little bit of heaven because of the Sacrifice of the Mass when we are privileged to receive the Body and Precious Blood of Jesus every day, and [our] adoration hours. These are the times when we receive all of our strength to

work with love."

In addition to cooking and housekeeping, Sister Helen Theresa used her strength to give Jesus' love to prisoners, the poor and the sick. In both Cincinnati and Marquette, Sister, in her spare time, visited with those imprisoned and generously helped out in food pantries and gave Communion and encouragement to the sick. An admirer said, "I feel she imitates Maria Anna Brunner's spirit as she goes out to the poor, the handicapped, and the sick."

The Sisters who lived and worked with her said Sister was always friendly and hospitable and put her heart and soul into what she did, whether it was serving a bishop or cleaning the kitchen floor. In her personal life she was an enthusiastic baseball player, superb decorator, and a person who managed to do it all — and with love.

Sister Helen Theresa's life, as she said, included a lot of little bits of heaven. "I am most grateful to the Congregation," said Sister, "for my continued experience of warmth, tenderness, kindness, love, spiritual growth...I embrace you [my Sisters] in the Holy Arms of Jesus and Mary and I give you the kiss of peace!"

You are where you belong, Helen Theresa — in the arms of Jesus, experiencing more than a little bit of heaven.

— Sister Nancy Kinross, CPPS