

IN MEMORIAM



Sr. Virginia Hebbeler

BORN: May 1921

ENTERED CONGREGATION: August 1939

DIED: October 28, 2014

Today we celebrate the gift of Sister Virginia Hebbeler to her family, the Congregation and the People of God. Virginia

Mary was born to parents Raymond and Mary Isabella (Bertram) Hebbeler in May 1921 in Cheviot, Ohio. She is the second of six children. Today we welcome her sister Anna May and several nieces and nephews to today's celebration of life.

Virginia attended St. Peter and Paul School graduating in 1935. She then attended Regina High School. Her high school yearbook says: "To describe her personality would mean to exhaust the dictionary. Through her four years at Regina, her giggles "deluxe" have reverberated throughout our halls. Joker, jester, funster ... is all of those in one."

She was planning to go to nursing school. "That had been my desire," she said, when considering the Sisters of the Precious Blood and was told we did not need any more nurses, we needed teachers. So ... she would become a teacher. She entered the Sisters of the Precious Blood in August 1939. She was given the name Sister Mary Claudine upon entering the novitiate the next year.

After profession she taught for nine years. Then Sister M. Claudine was asked if she wanted to study nursing because we now needed nurses. In 1949 she finished the year teaching and started nursing school that summer at Good Samaritan Hospital in Dayton. After a year and a half, the nursing administration told her she could take the State Board. She had not even completed her training. She proudly says she passed with a 95.6%. She was very proud. For a total of nineteen years

she served in several nursing capacities at Our Motherhouse Infirmary, Lourdes Hall, St. Joseph Children's Home, Maria-Joseph Home and Rome City, Indiana.

In 1966 Sister Virginia then went back to teaching for sixteen more years. She taught in Sacred Heart, Sedalia, Mo., St. Mark's Cincinnati, Ohio, Minister, Academy of the Little Flower, San Luis Rey, Calif., St. Rita, Dayton, St. Mary's Phoenix, Ariz., Queen of Peace, Mesa, Ariz., Our Lady of Grace, El Cajon, Calif., All Saints, Denver, Colo., St. Anne's Arvada, Colo. She wrote: "I am grateful to our community for the training and experience afforded me in both the teaching and the nursing fields. These were great assets when I began pastoral ministry."

Her greatest joy was working for 22 years at St. Mary's Parish in Phoenix, Arizona. She says: "The happiest years of my religious life were spend in Phoenix, Arizona working with the Franciscan Friars of Santa Barbara Province." She began as the bookkeeper. She said "my dad was a bookkeeper. It runs in the family." She attended the sick and needy as well as helping to prepare the data for becoming a basilica. She and the new pastor (Fr. Warren) were the new team. She said "we learned from each other, and if we disagreed about anything, it was always friendly. I think that both of us consider those as our golden days in ministry." She enjoyed the symphony, opera, and musical plays. She and the pastor occasionally make a "pastoral visit" to the local theatre. She completed a course at the Phoenix Police Citizen's Academy, where she learned to fire a revolver.

The highlight of her time at St. Mary's was receiving the Eucharist from Pope John Paul II in his visit to Sun Devil Stadium in Phoenix on September 14, 1978.

After retiring, she returned to Salem Heights. She became bookkeeper for the Sisters personal monies as well as some nursing responsibilities.

The week before her diamond jubilee celebration she was in the hospital. She said no, she would not participate in the jubilee celebration. One of the Sisters told the doctor and nurses she was celebrating 75 years in religious life and needed to be well so she could participate. They did "wonderful medicine" and she was home the day before the celebration. As the celebration continued through the day, she was totally delighted.

Her health had been very fragile this year. She moved to Emma Hall last month upon returning from the hospital. Last Friday evening she began a deep sleep. About Tuesday noon when she opened her eyes she was at the feet of the Lord.

A friend wrote how to describe Virginia:

V – Vibrant
I – Impish
R – Reliable
G – Generous
I – Individualistic
N – Neat
I – Independent
A – Always there

H – Humorous
E – Effective
B – Ball of Fire
B – Bad
E – Energetic
L – Loyal
E – Exceptional
R – Real

— Sister Mary Yarger, C.P.P.S.