

IN MEMORIAM



Sr. Virginia Huber

(Sister M. Adria)

BORN: July 1916

ENTERED CONGREGATION: September 8, 1930

DIED: May 10, 2009

IT was just six weeks ago when we gathered with Virginia to say our good-byes as she slowly gave herself to God. In accord with her request, her body was donated to Boonshoft School of Medicine at Wright State University.

Almost 93 years ago – in July 1916 – Virginia was born to Michael and Agatha (Brelage) Huber in Norwood, Ohio. Theresa, who is with us today, was only nine months old when Virginia left Cincinnati to enter the convent in Dayton on Sept. 8, 1930. She entered from St. John Parish, Deer Park, after being taught by the Sisters of the Precious Blood, who impressed her so much that she wanted to be one of them. When she entered the novitiate she received the name Sister Mary Adria.

During the novitiate she contracted tuberculosis, which was the reason that she was sent to Kniepp Sanitarium in Rome City, Ind., for treatment and recuperation after her profession of vows.

After a year in Rome City, Sister Virginia began her varied and fruitful ministry. During her first 16 years she was a teacher in Fort Wayne, Ind., St. Joseph, Mo., St. Mark, Cincinnati, and Our Lady of Good Counsel, Cleveland. As a teacher, students remember her as very strict but very kind to the downtrodden. Her ministry as a principal started at Our Lady of Good Counsel where her friendly and innovative spirit inspired both teachers and stu-

dents. In 1953 she became the founding principal at St. Anthony's School in Falls Church, Va., of which she was very proud. Later Sister Virginia was principal in the Coldwater [Ohio] Exempted School District and at St. Augustine in Rensselaer, Ind.

Sister Virginia had the opportunity to be well educated which, I am sure, facilitated her ministry. In 1944 she received her bachelor's of science degree in Education from the Athenaeum and in 1951 she received her master's in social science and education from St. John's in Cleveland. Her next degree, a bachelor's in theology from St. Joseph's, Rensselaer, was a good foundation for Virginia's future ministries.

In 1968, Sister Virginia transferred her skills to religious education, a ministry that was evolving to serve the many children who were not able to attend Catholic schools. She became director of religious education at Sacred Heart Catechetical Center in New Carlisle, Ohio, and later became consultant for the Cincinnati Archdiocesan Religious Education office. In 1975 she inaugurated the first regional office of religious education for the Toledo Diocese in Ottawa, Ohio. In between these ministries, in 1971 Sister Virginia was elected councilor for the congregation's Southern Region.

After her service with the congregation she prepared for and became a hospital chaplain in St. Joseph Hospital, Fort Wayne, Ind.

When she came to Salem Heights for retirement, she continued to be innovative with retreat work, baptism preparation, and eventually initiated the ALP (Always Learning Program). As always, Sister Virginia was aware of justice issues, which were integral in her teaching. In Dayton she became actively involved with the other sisters in the homicide vigils.

As I was preparing this, I felt that I was privileged in sneaking behind the scenes with the conversations and information about Virginia. She "was on the move" using her creative, innovative talents to accept others, bringing them to respond with their best and maybe at times their hidden talents. As one sister said, "she mentored well."

Besides these accomplishments of fulfilling the mission of Jesus in ministry, we are most grateful for the 78 years of religious life that Sister Virginia lived with us. Until the end she kept the smile on her face and kept us laughing with her wit. A secret that none of us will know is what happened between her and her God, during an extended prayer time before the Blessed Sacrament the day before she became very ill. She now is with our Living God, her eternal joy.

Virginia, thank you and may you rest in peace!

— Sister Marita Beumer