

## IN MEMORIAM



# Sr. Mary Delphine Kolker

BORN: April 1918

ENTERED CONGREGATION: June 8, 1934

DIED: August 21, 2012

**W**e gather here today to celebrate the life of our dear Sister Mary Delphine Kolker. Delphine was a gifted and devoted Sister of the Precious Blood for 78 years.

Geraldine Eleanora Kolker was born in Dayton, Ohio in April 1918 to John Kolker and Estella Young. She is survived by her sister Martha Glaser; her other sister, Patricia Fetter, died in 2004.

Geraldine's family moved from Dayton to Cincinnati which gave her the opportunity to attend Regina High School where the Sisters of the Precious Blood had a great influence on her. On June 8, 1934 at the end of her junior year, Geraldine entered the congregation and was given Sister Mary Delphine as her religious name.

Sister Delphine received her Bachelor's Degree in Education from the University of Dayton. Her first assignment was teaching the primary grades at Holy Trinity Parish in Bryant, Indiana. Soon after, she went to the Catholic University of America in Washington, DC where she received both her Masters and Doctorate in English with a minor in philosophy. One of her companions during that time remarked, "I marveled at her insight and wisdom. She is a warm, amiable, sensitive sister devoted to her family, CPPS Community and God."

Delphine taught high school and college at Salem Heights, San Luis Rey Academy, Central Catholic in Lafayette, Indiana and Regina in Norwood, Ohio. After that she went on to teach English and philosophy at St. Joseph College in Rensselaer, Indiana, St. John College in Cleveland and Cleveland State University. Many students enrolled in her classes and loved her both as a person and as a teacher. Her name is listed in the Dictionary of International Biography for distinguished scholarship.

"Versatility" best describes Sister

Delphine Kolker's ministries. Besides her extensive teaching career, she participated in the Congregation's general and regional chapters. She assisted in formation and served as the Postulant Director at which time she organized plays and programs with Aspirants, Postulants, and Novices. One of the former postulants said "Sr. Delphine seemed to really enjoy our gifts and talents and always wanted the best for us. She was always positive, very encouraging and complimentary." In 2008, fourteen of her former postulants, many of whom are here with us today gathered with Sister Delphine to celebrate her 90th birthday. That was a memorable day for her!

Delphine was an avid reader, creative writer and author. She has written many poems and articles for the Community, reviewed books, and translated numerous articles on philosophy from various languages into English, but she is most proud of her book of poetry entitled *Aspects and Attitudes*.

Delphine was a deeply spiritual person, treasuring times of prayer and quiet with her God. Her faithfulness to prayer overflowed into her kindness and helpfulness. After retiring in 1992, she relished her extra time for prayer. Delphine moved to Salem Heights in Dayton, Ohio in the year 2000, and then on to Emma Hall in 2010.

Delphine wasn't always serious-minded. She also had a lighter, more humorous side. Sister Rosella Hess in one of her notes said, "Delphine's sense of humor and expressions of wit were endless with those she knew well, however, because she was a bit shy with others, many had little realization of this. Delphine could "flow" from a most serious philosophical discussion into the lightest of entertainment often of her own making. She could move from the theoretical to the practical. Delphine was a delightful companion on any kind of tour; her knowledge and comments were not only informative but entertaining, or even comical."

In her younger years, one of Delphine's interests was traveling. She loved to travel by bus, in fact, once she bought an

"Ameri-Pass" that took her by Greyhound across the United States. Her intrepid spirit allowed her to go either alone or with a companion, at all times enjoying God's creation along the way. Other hobbies were cooking, playing the piano, sewing, and of course, writing poetry. I would like to share with you now a poem that Delphine wrote in 1957 for the Sisters who were celebrating their Golden Jubilees.

### JUBILEE

Let us on this day affirm the course the River took:

Through sheltering banks,  
Through rocks and fallen trees,  
Creating eddying pools where  
fish could feed;  
That cuts through hills and sun-filled  
Fields and forests,  
Its destination – the Mighty Sea.

Let us on this day give thanks for the finger

That traced the course from a thousand rills  
That leveled obstacles and gave the impetus  
With sweet low voice and proffered grace,  
Easing the resolve to constancy with  
A thousand rewards along the way.

Let us on this day give praise with  
The song of birds and the sound of rapids

To the Creator of seas and skies  
And hills and mountains,  
In the hush of dawn and stir of eventide,  
While the river goes on its unerring way to the sea.

Yes, let us give PRAISE and PRAISE and PRAISE  
Until these days shall end and then -  
PRAISE on forevermore.

— Sister Cecilia Taphorn, CPPS