

IN MEMORIAM



Sr. Mary Wilfred Thobe

BORN: February 1921

ENTERED CONGREGATION: May 18, 1939

DIED: September 16, 2011

At the time of her 50th Anniversary as a Sister of the Precious Blood, Sister Mary Wilfred Thobe said, I am most grateful that God has singled me out from many other girls to be a Precious Blood Sister. God has destined me to be his helper in spreading devotion to the Precious Blood, which I consider a privilege."

This morning we happily remember this woman specially chosen by her God to live fully the life of a Sister of the Precious Blood.

Paulena Thobe was born in February 1921 in Osgood, Ohio. She was the third of four children born to Joseph & Helena (Eilermann) Thobe. At the age of 18, Paulena entered the Congregation on May 18, 1939, becoming a postulant. When invested as a novice she received the religious name of Sister Mary Wilfred. She soon immersed herself in the Eucharist, the hours of adoration, the Divine Office, community prayers and her beloved rosary devotion — a prayer life to which she remained faithful all her years as a religious Sister of the Precious Blood.

After first profession of vows in 1942, Sister's obedience placed her at the Mother House in Dayton, Ohio, where she skillfully sewed the black surge habits. Her friends said of her in this task, "No one could do it as well" as she especially made very even the tucks in the gimp. Sister, however, humbly said, "It's not difficult once you know how."

Sister Mary Wilfred was in active

ministry for 50 years. For 39 of those years she ministered as a cook, seamstress and housekeeper at the Sisters' Motherhouse and at St. Joseph Orphanage, both in Dayton, Ohio; St. Charles in Carthagena Ohio; St. Gregory Seminary in Cincinnati, Ohio; Kneipp Springs in Rome City, Indiana; Lourdes Hall in Dayton, Ohio; and Maria Stein Convent in Maria Stein, Ohio.

One Sister friend of hers shared, "Of course you know that Sister Wilfred is a very quiet person. I think it might be all right to say she is seen but not heard, but all the while she is busy about many and varied tasks. Unassuming, she accomplishes much in her quiet way, without fanfare, seeking neither praise nor thanks." A Sister who worked with her at Lourdes Hall infirmary told us, "Sister is so conscientious! She wholeheartedly gives her time and energy to tasks at hand. The time she spent in Lourdes infirmary is a good example of this. She would not only do all that was needed, but she would go out of her way to visit with the sick as she performed her duties. Everyone loved her for her cheerfulness and encouragement."

She was also generous with her time and talents. She kept the gift shop and various charitable endeavors well supplied with her well made artistic crafts, including all kinds of stuffed animals. Sister made rosaries out of roses and she loved to embroider the squares that were made into crib quilts.

Described as "a good and loyal friend, always ready to help," Sister was

also someone to have fun with. She avidly played cards and bingo. Sister was known for playing six-handed pinochle in week-long tournaments at the cabin. She also rooted heartily for the Cincinnati Reds, and enjoyed all kinds of sports. While at Maria Stein she would often take her rod and a bucket to the retreat house pond after work and fished for a couple of hours. Catching something was not terribly important. Sister Mary Wilfred did not like to eat fish, but only catch them.

In 1981 Sister began working part-time in the Altar Bread Department. This work had led Sister Wilfred to reflect on how the words in the Eucharistic Prayer, "Bread made from human hands," gave meaning to her work. She realized that with her hands, she made the bread that becomes Jesus. "Through her hands, and a big smile, Sister Wilfred brings Jesus to many, many people," said another friend.

After 11 years in the Altar Bread Department, Sister retired at Salem Heights in 1992. Enjoying her bingo playing in retirement, she readily donated all her winnings to the CPPS missions. In June of this year, Sister Mary Wilfred made the decision to move to Emma Hall where this quiet, prayerful Sister of the Precious Blood continued to grow closer to Jesus who shed His Blood for us. He quietly took her in his arms early Friday morning. We are happy for you in your new life, Sister Mary Wilfred, and happy to have called you our Sister.

— Sister Nancy Kinross, CPPS