

IN MEMORIAM



Sr. Helen Nartker

(Sister M. Luciola)

BORN: October 1916

ENTERED CONGREGATION: September 7, 1932

DIED: March 6, 2007

THE Lord smiled, and in October 1916, a precious baby girl was born to Ferdinand and Gertrude (Inkrott) Nartker in Ottawa, Ohio. Five brothers and sisters welcomed Helen Marie into the family. They were Emil, Regina, Casper, Martha and Sylvester. Helen Marie was to be followed by three more brothers: Leo, Richard and Paul, and one more sister, Irene.

Today we join together to celebrate Sister Helen's life and the gift she was to all she touched. We extend deepest sympathy to Dick and Irene (Brooks) and to all of Sister Helen's family.

Sister Helen entered the Sisters of the Precious Blood on September 7, 1932, and was given the name Sister Mary Luciola. Sister Helen, one of this year's jubilarians, celebrated her 75th jubilee in heaven with Jesus, and with her deceased family, friends and Sisters of the Precious Blood.

Like Mother Brunner, Sister Helen always met the needs of the times with love, reconciliation, joy and compassion. It has been said that Sister Helen never said an unkind word to or about anyone. She truly lived a life of love, prayer and devotion. The term "active contemplative" would accurately describe her life.

Sister Helen also enjoyed social activities, cards, picnics and parties. On one occasion, a picnic had been planned at Indian Lake. It rained, but Sister Helen raised the garage doors to create an

overhang, and a fun time was had by all.

This dedicated woman was deeply rooted in prayer, and her love of the Eucharist was very evident to those who knew her. She proclaimed God's love by being a life-giving, reconciling presence in our fractured world. Her first ministry was bringing God's love to the little ones she taught for 36 years. These years of teaching — all in Ohio — were in Ottoville, North College Hill, St. Marys, New Riegel, Russia, Minster, Coldwater, Burkettsville and St. Rita's of Dayton.

Sister Helen loved teaching but felt the Lord calling her to a different ministry. As always, she responded with joy and enthusiasm.

In 1973, Sister Helen began her ministry in pastoral work and was one of the first sisters to serve in this capacity in the church. She was called to serve at Bethel, St. Mary of the Woods, Russells Point (this actually included all of Logan County, Ohio), Maria-Joseph Living Care Center and Columbus Grove. There were not enough hours in the day for Sister Helen to meet the needs of the sick, shut-ins, needy, elderly, lonely and dying, as well as those in jails, hospitals and nursing homes. Sister Helen brought many converts into the church, including my own biological mother.

An ecumenical person, she reached out to all. Sister Helen would leave no stone unturned in helping others. On many occasions she would appear at someone's door saying, "I made too much to eat. Can you help me out?" In 1976, Sister

Helen was chosen "Woman of the Year" by the Indian Lake Business and Professional Women's Club. She also served on the Logan County Health Advisory Board and belonged to the Logan County Ministerial Association. Sister Helen would take her turn one week at a time giving the "Moments of Meditation" on a Logan County radio station.

Sister Helen retired several times before retiring. Actually, she never did "retire." Even in her last days she was always looking for ways to be of service to others. When Sister Helen said, "I'm praying for you," you could be certain she was.

It was truly an honor and privilege to be with Sister Helen during the last 24 hours of her life. I'm sure that she was present with her family, Precious Blood community members, staff at Maria-Joseph Living Care Center and Hospice as we prayed, renewed vows, sang, and whispered words of comfort, love, gratitude and permission for her to go into the arms of her Lord. Just hours before her death she received the anointing of the sick from [Precious Blood] Father Peter Chiodo, who celebrated the Eucharist in the chapel at Maria-Joseph Center.

On Tuesday, March 6, 2007, at 4:58 p.m., Sister Helen met Jesus face to face... I can imagine the Lord saying to her, "Well done, good and faithful servant," as the choir of angels sang "Alleluia!"

Thank you, Sister Helen.

—Sister Tish Rawles