

## IN MEMORIAM



# Sr. Mary Bernard Reichert

BORN: April 1922

ENTERED CONGREGATION: August 10, 1940

DIED: June 24, 2007

**T**ODAY we celebrate the life of Sister Mary Bernard Reichert, who graced the world with her loving and gifted presence for 85 years and our congregation for 67 years. We extend our sympathy and prayers to her immediate family who are with us today, her brothers Paul, Don and Robert and her sisters Helen [Lokai] and Marie [Thomas] and other relatives and friends.

In Coldwater, Ohio, in April 1922, Wilibald and Cora (Ranly) Reichert welcomed Irma, their firstborn child and the future Sister Mary Bernard. In years that followed, this loving couple would be blessed with seven more children. Sister Bernard's brother, Joseph, died in infancy and her sister Martha Ann preceded Sister Mary Bernard in death. Sister Mary Bernard grew up in this loving family, eventually attending grade school at Holy Trinity, where she became acquainted with the Sisters of the Precious Blood who staffed the school.

Precious Blood Father Ernest Ranly, who served in South America for many years, and Sister Teresa Joseph, a Hartwell Franciscan Sister of the Poor, are first cousins of Sister Mary Bernard who have also lived the call to religious life through many years.

During 50 years of active ministry, "Sister Mary B," as she was affection-

ately called, distinguished herself as an outstanding math and science teacher. Wherever she taught, students were generous with their accolades. "She was the best teacher I ever had! "Her excellent teaching left a lasting impression," and, "Over and above, she helped instill values which have played a great role in our lives!" A fellow teacher commented, "She was definitely the best physical science teacher I've known! She developed quality students."

Sister Mary B was awarded many Science Foundation Grants and her students were the proud recipients of many science awards — all associated with her excellent teaching.

After 34 years in education, Sister Mary Bernard moved into a ministry of gerontology. It was in this area that she again extended herself totally and with great love. She first served as a pastoral caregiver at the Maria-Joseph Living Care Center, from 1987-1994. Later she was pastoral associate at St. Joseph Church in Wapakoneta, Ohio. A friend from the parish said, "I think she really does see Christ in everyone as she untiringly gives of her service!" We her sisters also did not miss the Christ in her. Sister Mary B stated of this period in her life, "At this time I developed a spiritual level in life, helpful to me in my retirement years. Now I can live by the motto: 'Let go, Let God!' "

Sister Mary Bernard loved to knit,

do needlepoint and embroidery. She was an avid reader particularly fond of historical books, those related to church, gerontology or current issues. Her love of reading was taken from her when she developed macular degeneration. This was a real cross for Sister Mary Bernard, who had been so independent and self-reliant all her life. But she accepted this as God's will and maintained a cheerful and grateful disposition. She was very humble and appreciative when others read to her.

Sister Mary Bernard came to Salem Heights in 2000 and resided here until 2005. When her physical needs became more demanding, she moved to the Maria-Joseph Living Care Center. Sister Mary Bernard lived a full, active, rewarding and fulfilling life — one that exemplified courage in the face of difficult obstacles. We admired her and saw in her the challenge to keep our hope and dreams alive with determination and perseverance.

Sister Mary Bernard, we thank you for sharing yourself and your gifts with us and with all those to whom and with whom you ministered. You can now abide in the life, the movements, and the very being of God. Eternal peace be yours, and may you, like Mother Brunner, continue this good work in heaven.

—Sister Nadine Kaschalk