

IN MEMORIAM



Sr. Ann Catherine Lehmkuhl

BORN: June 1932

ENTERED CONGREGATION: August 15, 1948

DIED: December 5, 2020

On an early summer day in 1932, a new member was added to the Harry and Cecilia Lehmkuhl family. Inez June Lehmkuhl was born in Minster, Ohio, the youngest of 5 children. She had 3 brothers (Robert, Lester, and Alfred) and 1 sister (Mary Lou), all of whom preceded her in death and were waiting for her in heaven, along with her parents.

As Inez was growing up in Minster there were few dull moments in their household. Among other things, she played games and cards with her siblings. Later in life she enjoyed playing cards with her nieces and nephews. According to her nephew Bill she would miraculously come up with the right card at the right time. You just couldn't beat her!

Inez had the Sisters of the Precious Blood as her teachers in elementary school. As she wrote, "Sensing the dedication and joy of the Sisters let the thought of being a teacher cross my mind, but join them — not me!" Apparently, God had other plans, and she listened to God's call for her life. She entered the Sisters of the Precious Blood on August 15, 1948. She was given the name of Sister Mary Ann Catherine. For the rest of her life, Ann was an educator. Beginning as a teacher of grades 3 and 4 in 1951 in Phoenix, Arizona and ending as a principal in 1998 in East Lansing, Michigan. In between, Ann ministered in Catholic Schools in Ohio, Indiana, Michigan, Virginia, North Dakota, and Colorado. She also taught in public school for 14 years in McCartyville and New Riegel. For her

60th Jubilee, Ann wrote: "Every place I ministered was 'my favorite' when I was missioned there. However, New Riegel emerges as very special because it was 'the Cradle of the Community' and embodied so much history of the Sisters of the Precious Blood. The convent, school and parish were constant reminders of those sisters who preceded us. Those sisters were the true missionaries who paved the way for us. It was a real inspiration to hear the laity speak of the hardships the early sisters endured, and how blessed they were to have the sisters teach in their school."

In 1974, while teaching in New Riegel, Ann received an Outstanding Teacher in America award. Ann was not only an outstanding teacher; she was also an outstanding student. He was constantly taking classes during the summer to enable her to be a better teacher. When she was in Colorado, she even attended The Colorado School of Mines. The certificate she received said that she was certified for the "Position of Informed Educator ... and is qualified to act in said capacity in any coal mine in the State of Colorado." I don't know if she ever was an informed educator in a mine, but she was qualified!

While being a very excellent teacher and principal, she also had a playful streak in her. One of her pranks had to do with the different bells or combination of bells of the 6 entrances to a convent. She, and unnamed accomplices, switched the wiring so that the various doors sounded a different bell than usual, causing great confusion! Sister Della Mae Meyer shared a story of when she and Ann were both teaching at McCartyville. They lived at Minster and would take SR 119 to get to

school. Ann's parents lived on 119. When her mother would bake cookies, she would put the cookies in the mailbox and put up the red flag. When they drove past and saw the flag up, they would pull off the road, open the mailbox, and take out the cookies! That way they broke no rules and enjoyed the cookies. A win-win!

Family was very important to Ann. She would not miss birthdays, anniversaries, graduations, or any other important celebrations. Her nephew Steve told me, and the whole family agreed, that she gave the best hugs! Another thing she would always say is that there's a right way, then there's the Lehmkuhl way. That seems to be the way she lived and died, the Lehmkuhl way.

Above all, Ann lived Precious Blood Spirituality, especially in celebrating and living daily Eucharist. Daily prayer for reconciliation, for justice, and for the marginalized were also important to her. In her mission reflection form from several years ago she wrote, "My work provides opportunities to proclaim God's love by a joyful spirit and a peaceful attitude with those whom I come into contact. Hopefully I can be a loving, hospitable presence to others." I think we can agree, that pretty well sums up how she lived her life for 72 years as a Sister of the Precious Blood. She will be missed by her family and by her Precious Blood Sisters, especially by her good friend Rosemary.

As you now participate in the heavenly banquet, Ann, remember us. Rest in peace.

— Sister Ceil Taphorn