Sister Mary Ada Rohr

Born: 1908
Entered Congregation: 1922
Died: September 15, 1985

Sister Mary Ada Rohr, formerly Helen Cecilia, was born in 1908 in Cleveland, Ohio, to Rosalia and Peter Rohr, two immigrants from Germany. Sister Mary Ada entered the Congregation at Maria Stein at the age of 14, and at 17 started teaching school at Versailles, Ohio.

For more than 40 years, Sister Ada taught little children, preparing many for their First Holy Communion. She ministered as a teacher in the Ohio schools of Columbus Grove, Ottoville, Ottawa; Resurrection, Dayton; and St. Joseph's Orphanage also in Dayton. She also taught in Fort Wayne, Indiana, and Sedalia, Missouri.

In later years, Sister Mary Ada showed what was her truest gift: love for the sick. Having many serious bouts of illness herself, she knew how much a kind word and a simple offer of assistance could relieve those in pain.

For a time she acted as a nursing assistant at Royal Crest Manor in Ottawa. At the convent, she would be the first to recognize those seriously ill and in need of care. She willingly changed their bandages, bathed their feet, gave them medication, and offered advice, support and comfort.

She touched the lives of many: helping a young man with an intellectual disability prepare for his First Communion; helping a widow accept her husband's death; and visiting and befriending prisoners and the sick. She also became a licensed solicitor for St. Anthony Messenger, seeing this as one way she could be a missionary.

In the last few years, Sister Ada suffered a great deal. Over and over again, she asked for grace to accept the Lord's will and to become more like Jesus.

On September 15, 1985, Sister surrendered herself to death without fear, saying, "Lord, into your hands I commend my spirit; Thy will be done." We rejoice in Sister Mary Ada's final and greatest victory: a total "yes" to God in offering her life in love and gratitude.