

Death Notice

SISTER MARY SEBASTIEN ND 4070

Jean Claire SCHMIDT



Immaculate Heart of Mary Province, Covington, Kentucky, USA

Date and Place of Birth	May 27, 1927	Newport, KY
Date and Place of Profession	August 11, 1948	Covington, KY
Date and Place of Death	March 22, 2018	Covington, KY
Date and Place of Burial	March 28, 2018	Covington, KY

Sr. Mary Sebastien (Jean) Schmidt was born to Helen and Joseph Schmidt. She was the second of two children. She attended St. Stephen Elementary School and then graduated from Notre Dame Academy in 1945. She entered the Sisters of Notre Dame in September of the same year, making her profession of vows on August 11, 1948.

Sister Sebastien continued her education and graduated from Villa Madonna College, Xavier University, and Regina Mundi in Italy. Sister's first assignments were in elementary education at St. Augustine School in Covington and Sacred Heart School in Bellevue. She spent several years teaching religion, Latin, and history at Notre Dame Academy in Covington and Bishop Brossart High School in Alexandria, Kentucky.

In 1990 Sister was missioned to Holy Trinity Parish and School in Harlan, Kentucky. On arriving, she realized the need not merely to teach but to help serve the entire Harlan community. She set out immediately by sending bi-monthly appeal letters and giving mission talks. Sister's outreach included more than appeals for funds. She also had a convent front porch pantry for distributing food, diapers, clothing, and money for medicine.

On April 19, 1996, the Diocese of Lexington honored Sister Sebastien with the Mission Award for her work in Harlan, Kentucky. Sister was part of the historic role of the Catholic Church to combine the traditional Christian message with an effort to work in communities to help people help themselves.

Later in April 1996 the book "Women of Coal" was published. It is about strong women with strong stories. The Sisters from Holy Trinity Church and School are honored. In the book Sister Sebastien is quoted: "When we hear someone at the door we never turn them away because it may be Christ knocking."

In 2002, after a stroke, she retired to Lourdes Hall at St. Joseph Heights. Nevertheless, she continued various forms of outreach, including her appeal letters for the Learning Center in Harlan, which succeeded the school. As a child, Sister's mother had taught her to say "All for Jesus" in every situation. In her years of teaching and serving others, Sister Sebastien always lived by those words. Sister would have celebrated seventy years of religious life this summer, her Jubilee of Grace.

Sister Mary Sebastien went home to God, surrounded by her family and friends on March 22, 2018. May the Lord who has witnessed her work be her abundant reward. May she rest in peace.