

Death Notice

SISTER MARY JOSELEEN ND 4092

Catherine Frances HEMKER

Immaculate Conception Province, USA

Date and Place of Birth:	January 29, 1925	Delphos, Ohio
Date and Place of Profession:	August 13, 1946	Toledo, Ohio
Date and Place of Death:	December 15, 2020	Sylvania, Ohio



“By living in the presence of God in the spirit of faith, we trust that one day we will be led to the fullness of joy when we shall see God face to face.”

These words from the Constitutions of the Sisters of Notre Dame characterize well the life of Sister Mary Joseleen Hemker. On December 15, 2020, God called her to eternal joy after 75 years of religious life at age 95.

Born on January 29, 1925, and baptized Catherine Frances, she became part of a large family of five girls and seven boys who lived on a farm in Delphos, Ohio. Two boys died at a young age, but the remaining ten children grew close and continued to share many family events together.

She recalled as a student in grade two looking to the sky and thinking, “Jesus, how I want to help all kinds of people to know You and be with You in heaven!” Throughout her life that wish was fulfilled. Catherine graduated from St. John High School before entering the Congregation of the Sisters of Notre Dame in 1943 and being invested in 1944.

Sister enjoyed teaching primary grades in the Toledo Diocese for twelve years, before becoming an Adoration Sister in the Motherhouse. While in Rome for 40 years she felt privileged to be close to the heart of the Catholic Church. She loved attending liturgical functions such as canonizations at St. Peter’s. From Palm Sunday through Good Friday, she was hardly seen at the Motherhouse, so intent was she on participating at the Holy Week services at the Coliseum or St. Peter’s. Besides several hours of prayer daily as an adoration sister, Sister Mary Joseleen was the community coordinator during some of her years in Rome, a position for which she was highly respected and loved.

Sister Mary Joseleen returned to the United States in 2000 and lived at Lial Convent, where she faithfully continued her ministry of prayer. As in Rome, Sister prayed many hours in the presence of the Eucharist in intercession for others. Her gentle, quiet manner accompanied by her welcoming smile expressed her appreciation and care for all whom she met.

With serious health needs she became a patient at Rosary Care Center where she was awaiting surgery. Her Divine Bridegroom released her from her sufferings and anxiety to bring her to himself on Tuesday evening, December 15, 2020. May she enjoy the embrace of her heavenly spouse.