



CONGREGATION OF BENEDICTINE SISTERS OF PERPETUAL ADORATION
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News Release

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Benedictine Sister Miriam Humbel remembered for grace and intelligence

CLYDE, Mo.— Benedictine Sister of Perpetual Adoration Miriam Humbel, OSB passed away Jan. 29, 2009, in Clyde, Mo.

She was born Mary Margaret Humbel to Fred and Katherine Seman Humbel on Sept. 8, 1924, in Cleveland, Ohio. Her father was a cabinet maker from Cleveland, and her mother was a homemaker born in Austria. Mary was the oldest of four children, two brothers, Carl and Fred, and a sister, Dorothy.

Mary attended St. Vincent de Paul grade school and St. Stephen Commercial High School where she studied typing, shorthand and bookkeeping. She did housework to help pay tuition.

After graduating from high school, Mary worked as a bookkeeper for a manufacturing company. When the United States entered World War II, Mary worked at a bomber plant for six months before enlisting in the Women's Army Air Corp.

She served stateside for two years then transferred to the WAC, arriving in Paris on V-J Day. She was a driver for a general and was assigned as a clerk-typist during the 10 months she was stationed in Vienna, Austria, and received an honorable discharge at the war's conclusion.

Returning to Cleveland, Mary worked as an accounts payable bookkeeper in the business office of a hospital and attended night classes at college. During this time, Mary and her brother (who was also a veteran) bought a house for their parents using the G.I. Bill.

Feeling a call to contemplative community, Mary discovered the Benedictine Sisters of Perpetual Adoration through one of the booklets found in the vestibule of St. Mary's Church, a Jesuit parish in Cleveland.



Sister Miriam Humbel

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She entered at Clyde as a postulant on Feb. 2, 1950, and was invested as a novice later that year on her birthday, Sept. 8. She became Sister Miriam when she made her first monastic profession on Sept 15, 1951.

After several years as a junior sister in Clyde, Sister Miriam was transferred to the monastery in Tucson, Ariz. In 1956, she returned to Clyde for her final monastic profession and remained there until 1966 when she was transferred to the monastery in Kansas City.

She was a typesetter in the Clyde printery, baked altar breads in Tucson and Kansas City, and handled the monastery bookkeeping in Clyde and Kansas City. In early years, she worked the Clyde Farm and was responsible for all the correspondence for the pedigree Holstein herd. She also served as prioress of the monastic community in Kansas City.

In 1974, Sister Miriam was appointed treasurer general for the Congregation and moved to St. Louis where she served in that position for 22 years until she retired. Sister Miriam then became the monastery bookkeeper until the finance offices were consolidated. She spent a short time in Tucson before she returned to Clyde as a resident of Our Lady of Rickenbach, the Sisters' healthcare facility.

She possessed a keen financial mind and was a fierce, competitive card player. When dealt an unlucky hand she would stand up and circle the chair to change her luck.

She enjoyed watching sports, playing chess and winning at Scrabble. In later years, she was able to play chess and Scrabble with her computer. The machine gave her some tough competition, but the victory was made sweeter for her when she won.

Sister Miriam was an intelligent and dynamic member of community and enhanced every place she lived and worked. She will be fondly remembered for her humor, her sense of adventure and for her love of the Lord and contemplative life.

She is survived by her monastic family; a brother, Fred Humbel; a brother-in-law, Raymond Palascak; nephews and a niece.

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