



CONGREGATION OF BENEDICTINE SISTERS OF PERPETUAL ADORATION
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News Release

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Benedictine Sister Mary Demetria Newman Passes

CLYDE, Mo. – Sister Mary Demetria Newman, OSB, 90, passed away Sept. 15, 2008, at Our Lady of Rickenbach in Clyde. She was a member of the Benedictine Sisters of Perpetual Adoration.

She was born Frances Cecilia Newman on April 21, 1918, in Norman, Okla., to Otto Joseph and Mary Agnes (Meyer) Newman. Her family moved to California when she was 5 years old and settled in Maywood, a suburb of Los Angeles. She learned how to sew and to cook as a child. After graduating from high school, she worked as a housekeeper for a year before pursuing her childhood dream of becoming a religious sister.

“Many years after I was in the convent I learned that when my grandmother held me in her arms at my baptism, she asked the Blessed Mother to obtain a religious vocation for me,” Sister Mary Demetria once recalled. “Her prayer was answered because from the first dawn of reason, I had this desire and conviction. Moreover, I had a picture in my mind of exactly the kind of nun I was going to be – not teaching, not nursing, but the kind that prays.”

Discouraged by her lack of interest in the religious communities she had inquired about, she asked her mother what she should do. Her mother advised she write to the Benedictine Sisters in Clyde to ask them to pray for her to find the right place. Her mother said she always received help with whatever she asked them to pray for. So Sister Mary Demetria wrote to Clyde and was sent the vocation booklet, “The Eucharistic Adorer.” “On opening the book and seeing the sisters, I knew this was where God wanted me,” she once said.



Sister Mary Demetria Newman

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When she talked it over with her mother, she learned her grandmother was born in nearby Conception, Mo., and her mother was also born in the area and knew of the Clyde community. Her mother had not shared this with her previously because she wanted to leave Sister Mary Demetria free to go wherever God directed.

She entered in 1939 and made her first profession on Feb. 8, 1941, receiving the name Sister Mary Demetria. During her years as a Benedictine Sister, she worked in the laundry and in maintenance. She made and mended cucullas and veils for the novices and served as a night nurse in the infirmary.

She later moved to the sisters' community in Tucson, Ariz., where she worked in the altar bread department and sewed liturgical vestments. A gifted seamstress, she was privileged to help with the drapery for the new altar when the Tucson monastery's chapel was consecrated and helped with vestments for Bishop Green's consecration.

Sister Mary Demetria was preceded in death by her parents and an infant sister. Survivors include her monastic family; a sister, Theresa Patrick, Coeur d'Alene, Idaho; three brothers, Joseph Newman, Downey, Calif., John Newman, Santa Anna, Calif. and Fred Newman, Vancouver, Wash.

A Mass of Christian Burial was held Sept. 17 in the Adoration Chapel, with burial in Mount Calvary Cemetery, Clyde, Mo. Memorials can be sent in care of the Benedictine Sisters of Perpetual Adoration, 31970 State Highway P, Clyde, Mo. 64432-8100.

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