



Sisters of St. Francis of Mary Immaculate

At daybreak on Sunday morning, November 9, 2008, Sr. Rhea Heinz, took leave of her Franciscan sisters, her family members and friends, and all those whom she loved so much in this life. Like a true sailor, she waited for the Morning Star to guide her on her journey home to God. Pulling up the anchors that held her to this earth, Seaman Heinz navigated her way to heaven's portal where her loving God joyfully awaited her arrival.

Born in Portage, Wisconsin on May 4, 1923, Henrietta Wilma Heinz was the loving daughter of Martin and Margaret (Harman) Heinz. A watchful sister over her siblings, Ronald, Dorothy, Betty, and Keith, she is remembered fondly for the countless ways in which she cared for each of them. In October of 1944, she enlisted in the WAVES [Women Accepted for Volunteer Emergency Services]. As a member of the United States Naval Reserve, she trained for aviation services at Hunter College in the Bronx, New York. When asked to describe the duties she fulfilled at Ellyson Field and Whiting Field, two of the Naval Air Stations in Pensacola, Florida, she would tip her head and with a playful smile simply say: "I put planes to bed." While in the service of her country, Seaman First Class Heinz became a Roman Catholic. Baptized on March 27, 1946, she attributed her entrance into the Church to the "friendly influences, spiritual guidance by the base chaplain, and the good example of other Catholic WAVES." One month later, on April 30, 1946, she was honorably discharged and returned to civilian life. Reflecting upon her experience, she said: "I learned a disciplined life-style with Navy rules and regulations ... and fully realized the importance of obedience in my life."

In the years that followed, Henrietta was introduced to the Sisters of St. Francis of Mary Immaculate by one of the "friendly influences" of her Navy days. On September 4, 1951, she entered the Postulancy and on August 12, 1952, she was received into the Novitiate and given the name Sister Mary Bartholomew. She made her First Profession on

Alleluia!



Sister Rhea Heinz, OSF

August 12, 1954. In the Spring of 1955, she left the classroom to undergo delicate back surgery at Mayo Clinic. In May, she wrote to Mother Immaculate saying, "This year has been an enlightening one spiritually and otherwise. I have enjoyed my role as a busy Martha, but the time spent as a prayerful Mary has been most meaningful for me." Making the best of every challenge that came her way, she was a true representative of the "greatest generation."

Graduating from the College of St. Francis with a major in Mathematics and a minor in Philosophy, Sr. Rhea taught for forty years in elementary schools in Ohio and Illinois, including thirteen years at St. John the Baptist School, Joliet and eight years at St. Stephen School, Streator. Consistently, she was recognized for her dedication as a teacher and for the learning environments she created for her students. During the final fourteen years of her life, she was a resident at Our Lady of Angels Retirement Home where she devoted herself to prayer and community service.

A Sister of St. Francis of Mary Immaculate for fifty-seven years and a member of the WAVES for two, Sr. Rhea Heinz was an example of fidelity and obedience. She was a sister and a sailor who was found worthy of trust by all those who placed their confidence in her – whether seamen or second-graders. She, in turn, placed all of her confidence in God, the Lord of sea and sky, whose glory her eyes now see. Thank you for teaching us with your words and speaking through your actions. May you rest in peace, Sister Rhea. Amen. Alleluia.

Sister Rhea Heinz, OSF

May 4, 1923 — November 9, 2008

Born: May 4, 1923
Parents: Martin and Margaret (Harman) Heinz
Postulancy: September 4, 1951
Novitiate: August 12, 1952
First Profession: August 12, 1954
Final Profession: August 13, 1957
Entered New Life: November 9, 2008

Ministry History

1954-1955 Teacher: Grade 3; St. Peter, Mansfield, Ohio
1955-1960 Teacher: Grades 3, 4; Assumption, Chicago, Illinois
1960-1963 Teacher: Grade 2; St. Procop, Cleveland, Ohio
1963-1965 Teacher: Grade 2; St. Cyril, Chicago
1965-1973 Teacher: Grade 2; St. Bernard, Joliet, Illinois
1973-1986 Teacher: Grade 2 / Grade 3; St. John, Joliet
1986-1994 Teacher: Grade 3; St. Stephen, Streator, Illinois
1994-2008 Community Service: OLA

Wake: Thursday, November 13, 2008, 2:00-6:45 p.m., Our Lady of Angels, Joliet
Prayer Service: Thursday, November 13, 2008, 4:45 p.m., Our Lady of Angels, Joliet
Mass of Christian Burial: Thursday, November 13, 2008, 7:00 p.m., Our Lady of Angels, Joliet
Burial: Friday, November 14, 2008, leaving Our Lady of Angels at 9:00 a.m. to Resurrection Cemetery, Romeoville, IL
Interment: S8-L7-G2 Resurrection Cemetery
Predeceased by: Her parents, Martin and Margaret (Harman) Heinz; and her brother Ronald
Survived by: Her sisters, Dorothy (Eugene) Brown and Betty (Floyd) Oliver, and brother Keith (Inge) Heinz, and sister-in-law, Norma (Ronald) Heinz

Rest in Peace, Sister Rhea