

**Sister M. Bede Kerkhoff, O.S.F.**

745

Born: August 29, 1898  
Parents: Peter and Mary (Onkels) Kerkhoff  
Entered from: St. Agnes, Ashland, WI  
Postulancy: September 1, 1924  
Novitiate: August 12, 1925  
Profession: August 12, 1927  
Died: Tuesday, January 14, 1997 at Our Lady of Angels Retirement Home at approximately 1:30 p.m.



**Ministry:**

1926 - 1932 Immaculate Conception, Columbus, OH, Grades 2-3, 3-4, 5-6  
1932 - 1935 St. Pascal, Chicago, IL, Grades 5-6  
1935 - 1938 St. Boniface, Chicago, IL, Grade 6  
1938 - 1943 St. Joseph, Freeport, IL, Grades 5-6  
1943 - 1946 Cathedral of St. Raymond, Joliet, IL, Grade 6  
1946 - 1955 Our Lady of Mercy, Granville, OH, Prefect, Teacher  
1955 - 1958 College of St. Francis, Joliet, IL, Dining Service  
1958 - 1965 St. Mary Help of Christians, Green Creek, IL, Grades 3-4, 5-6  
1965 - 1967 St. Mary, Des Plaines, IL, Grade 6  
1967 - 1970 Holy Family, Bayfield, WI, Grades 5-6, 3-4  
1970 - 1973 St. Francis Convent, Joliet, IL, General Assistant  
1973 - 1976 St. Francis Convent, Joliet, IL, Sacristan, Tutor  
1976 - 1981 St. Francis Convent, Joliet, IL, Tutor  
1981 - 1997 Our Lady of Angels Retirement Home, Joliet, IL, Retired

Wake: Our Lady of Angels, Joliet, IL, Friday, January 17, 1997  
2-7:00 p.m. with a prayer service at 4:30 p.m.

Mass of Christian Burial: Our Lady of Angels, Joliet, IL, Friday, January 17, 1997

Burial: Saturday, January 18, 1997 leaving Our Lady of Angels at  
9:00 a.m. to Resurrection Cemetery, Romeoville, IL,  
S8-L339-G6

Survived by: nieces and nephews

*For those who have been faithful, O Lord,*

*life is not ended, but merely changed.*

Sister Bede Kerkhoff was born in Wrightstown, Wisconsin, August 29, 1898 to Peter and Mary Kerkhoff. She was baptized Clara at St. Paul's Church in Wrightstown. Clara was the fifth of ten children. Young Clara attended St. Mary Parochial School in Wrightstown, Wisconsin. All through her life Clara cherished the love and encouragement given by her parents. Later, their family moved to Ashland, Wisconsin, where they came to know the Franciscan Friars of Sacred Heart Province and the Sisters of St. Francis of Mary Immaculate. One of the priests who was an inspiration to Clara was Father Bede. The family were active members of St. Agnes Parish in Ashland. As a young woman, Clara was seen by her employer, and by others who knew her, as honest, friendly, efficient, and very capable.

On September 1, 1924, Clara came to Joliet to be a postulant with the Joliet Franciscan Sisters. The following August, Clara was received as a novice in the Congregation and given the name, Sister Mary Bede. One of the happiest days of Sister Bede's life was August 12, 1929 when she made her first profession of vows.

Sister Bede began her ministry of teaching at Immaculate Conception Parish in Columbus, Ohio. Many students over the years would benefit from Sister Bede's wisdom and caring as an educator. She taught in Illinois, Ohio and Wisconsin. Sister Bede earned a Bachelor of Arts degree at the College of St. Francis.

When a special need arose to educate the girls at Our Lady of Mercy in Granville, Ohio, Sister Bede took courses in training as a special education teacher at Cardinal Stritch College in Milwaukee, Wisconsin, so that she would be prepared to work at Our Lady of Mercy in Granville. The girls at Granville experienced Sister Bede's faith and devotion. Sister Bede brought her years of ministry as a teacher to a close by returning to her native Wisconsin and teaching the children at Holy Family School in Bayfield, Wisconsin.

When her years of full time teaching were completed, Sister Bede continued to educate as a tutor in the Reading Center at the Motherhouse. She also took pride in caring for the linens at the Motherhouse Chapel.

In 1982, Sister Bede moved to Our Lady of Angels Retirement Home, spending time visiting with her friends, spending time in prayer and reflection, reading and doing various kinds of handiwork. As Sister Bede's strength gradually failed, she continued to pray and to be support for those around her. In the quiet and decisive way that she had lived her life, Sister Bede went to her God on the early afternoon of January 14, 1997, while her Sisters kept vigil in prayer.

Sister Bede, we thank you for your spirit of prayer and dedication in leading your students closer to God. As you enter into God's presence forever, we ask you to pray for us, your students, your family members, all priests and religious, especially your Franciscan Sisters. May you know God's comfort and love forever. Amen. Alleluia.

