

Sister M. Cassilda McMahon, O.S.F.

784



Born: August 7, 1899
 Parents: James and Elizabeth (Tierney) McMahon
 Entered from: St. Patrick Parish, Galion, Ohio
 Postulancy: October 2, 1916
 Novitiate: August 12, 1917
 Profession: August 12, 1919
 Died: Tuesday, August 17, 1999 at Our Lady of Angels Retirement Home,
 at 1:50 p.m.

Ministry:

1918 - 1919 St. Joseph, Pesotum, IL, Music, Organist
 1919 - 1920 St. Francis Academy, Joliet, IL, Music; St. Bernard's Music: Grades 1-4
 1920 - 1925 St. Boniface, Chicago, IL, Music, Grade 3, 4
 1925 - 1930 Immaculate Conception, Columbus, OH, Music, Organist
 1930 - 1931 St. Francis Academy, Joliet, IL, Music
 1931 - 1933 Sacred Heart, Englewood, IL, Music; St. Dionysius, Benton, MO, Grades 7, 8
 1933 - 1941 St. Peter, Mansfield, OH, Applied, Church, and Class Music
 1941 - 1942 Sacred Heart, Englewood, IL, Applied Music, Organist
 1942 - 1943 St. Clement, Chicago, IL, Applied and School Music
 1943 - 1947 SS. Peter and Paul, Chicago, IL, Applied and School Music, Choir, Organist
 1947 - 1948 St. Benedict, Ladd, IL, Catechetical work, Organist
 1948 - 1949 St. Mary, Rock Island, IL, Grades 4, 5, 6
 1949 - 1951 Guardian Angel Home, Joliet, IL, Music, Choir, Organist
 1951 - 1954 St. Procopius, Chicago, IL, Music Classes, Organist, Choral: St. Anthony Hospital
 1954 - 1955 Most Pure Heart of Mary, Shelby, OH, Grade 3, Music
 St. Francis Assisi, Chicago, IL, Grade 4, Music
 1955 - 1959 St. Francis de Sales, Toledo, OH, Grades 5, 6, Organist
 1959 - 1960 St. Francis Assisi, Red Cliff, WI; Holy Family, Bayfield, WI, Grades 5,6,7,8 Music
 1960 - 1961 St. Coleman, Pompano Beach, FL, Grade 6, Organist
 1961 - 1962 St. Mary, Des Plaines, IL, Grade 6
 1962 - 1963 Sacred Heart (Huron St.), Chicago, IL, Grades 5, 6; Organist
 1963 - 1965 St. Stephen, Streator, IL, Grades 5, 6; Organist
 1965 - 1968 Assumption, Chicago, IL, Grades 5-6; Organist
 1968 - 1971 SS. Peter and Paul, Chicago, IL, Organist
 1971 - 1972 Assumption, Chicago, IL, Organist
 1972 - 1975 St. Ludmilla, Chicago, IL, Organist
 1975 - 1976 St. Bernard, Joliet, IL, Parish Ministry
 1976 - 1977 Assumption, Chicago, IL, Parish Ministry
 1977 - 1985 St. Ludmilla/Assumption, Chicago, IL, Parish Ministry
 1985 - 1989 St. Ludmilla, Chicago, IL, Parish Ministry
 1989 - 1999 Our Lady of Angels Retirement Home, Retired

Wake: Our Lady of Angels, Joliet, IL, Sunday August 22, 1999
 2-7 p.m. with a prayer service at 4:30 p.m.
 Mass of Christian Burial: Our Lady of Angels, Joliet, IL
 Sunday, August 22, 1999 at 7:00 p.m.
 Burial: Monday, August 23, 1999 leaving Our Lady of Angels at
 9:00 a.m. to Resurrection Cemetery, Romeoville, IL,
 Section 8, Lot, 336, Grave 3
 Survived by: her sister Ruth Hennuese, nieces, nephews, cousins

*For those who have been faithful, O Lord,
life is not ended, but merely changed.*

Sister Cassilda McMahan was born in Galion, Ohio on August 7, 1899 to James and Elizabeth (Tierney) McMahan. She was baptized Mary Marguerite at St. Joseph Church in Galion on August 13, 1899. She was the second oldest of nine children. They attended St. Patrick's School.

On October 2, 1916, Mary was received as a postulant with the Franciscan sisters in Joliet, Illinois. On August 12, 1917 Mary received the Franciscan habit as a novice and was given the name Sister Mary Cassilda. She continued her studies at the convent normal school and later received a bachelor of music degree from DePaul University in Chicago.

After her first profession of vows on August 12, 1919, Sister Cassilda began a lifetime of ministry at St. Joseph School in Pesotum, Illinois in the heartland of Illinois farm country. Her many years of teaching and ministry to the poor took her to various schools in Illinois, including Pesotum, Joliet, Chicago, Ladd, Rock Island, DesPlaines, and Streator. In Ohio, Sister Cassilda taught in Columbus, Mansfield, and Shelby. She served in Benton, Missouri and in Red Cliff and Bayfield, Wisconsin, as well as in Pompano Beach, Florida.

In her senior years of semi-retirement in Chicago, Sister Cassilda was a frequent rider on the Chicago busses. She would crisscross the neighborhoods of Chicago in search of food and clothing for the poor. When Sister Cassilda had her farewell from her ministry at St. Ludmilla's Parish in Chicago, Father Michael Boehm wrote, "I am very grateful to Sister Cassilda and the Franciscans for her time here at St. Ludmilla. During my pastorate she was actively involved in the food pantry, the Seniors Club, a minister of the sick, and an extraordinary minister of Communion. In the name of the entire parish I wish to express my gratitude for the gospel witness of religious life that she lived out among us. She truly was an instrument of the "Good News." Sister Cassilda was an active participant in programs of spiritual renewal and had a special affection for the days of reflection offered by the Franciscans at St. Peter's in Chicago's Loop. She figured out a way to get from Chicago to Joliet, with several transfers, for only \$1.00, taking advantage of her senior citizen status.

Only when she was 90 years old did Sister Cassilda come to Joliet to retire at Our Lady of Angels Retirement Home. This past August Sister Cassilda had the distinction of being the first Sister in this Franciscan Congregation to celebrate her 100th birthday. She received letters from Cardinal Francis George of Chicago, Bishop Joseph Imesch of Joliet, the Governor of Illinois and the President of the United States, together with hundreds of others who wished her well for her 100th birthday. She was honored with at least three birthday parties during that week of celebration and actively participated in each of them. She sang along as a choral group performed a selection of songs she had written over a half a century ago. Members of her family were able to join her in these celebrations and she told stories of the "old" days. The following week her condition weakened and late in the night of Monday, August 16, 1999, she slipped into a coma. At 1:50 p.m. on Tuesday, August 17th, she went peacefully to God as the sisters kept a prayerful watch at her bedside.

Sister Cassilda, we are grateful for the gift of your life and the beauty of your music. May you continue to pray for us together with the angelic choirs. May you enjoy the peace and love of God forever. Amen. Alleluia.

