

Sister M. Protase Novak, O.S.F.

Born: November 23, 1911
Parents: Thomas and Anna Lescinsky Novak
Entered from: Sacred Heart Parish, Chicago, IL
Postulancy: September 5, 1927
Novitiate: August 12, 1928
Profession: August 12, 1930
Died: Saturday, March 22, 1997 at Our Lady of Angels Retirement Home at approximately 1:57 a.m.

**Ministry:**

1930 - 1931 St. Joseph, Joliet, IL, Grade 4
 1931 - 1935 St. Stephen, Streator, IL, Grades 4, 7
 1935 - 1941 St. Stephen, Johnstown, PA, Grades 7, 8
 1941 - 1944 St. Peter, Mansfield, OH, Grade 7, High School English, History, Math, French
 1944 - 1952 St. Procop High School, Cleveland OH, English, Spanish, History, Journalism
 1952 - 1953 St. Michael High School, Sigel, IL
 1953 - 1957 SS. Peter & Paul High School, Chicago, IL, Math, Spanish, Religion
 1957 - 1960 Central Catholic High School, Toledo, OH, Spanish, French
 1960 - 1974 College of St. Francis, Joliet, IL, Instructor: Romance Languages Department
 1974 - 1988 St. Francis Academy, Joliet, IL, French
 1988 - 1997 Our Lady of Angels Retirement Home, Retired

Wake: Our Lady of Angels, Joliet, IL, Tuesday, March 25, 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, Tuesday, March 25, 1997, 7 p.m.
Burial: Wednesday, March 26, 1997 leaving Our Lady of Angels 9:30 a.m.
 to Resurrection Cemetery, Romeoville, IL, S8-L339-G2
Survived by: her sister Verne (Peter) Christoff

For those who have been faithful, O Lord,

Life is not ended, but merely changed.

Sister Protase Novak was born in Chicago, Illinois on November 23, 1911 to Thomas and Anna Novak. Three days later she was baptized in Sacred Heart Church, on Huron Street in Chicago, and given the name Elizabeth. Elizabeth was one of five daughters. Her sisters were Anne, Mary, Margaret and Verne.

Having completed grammar school at Sacred Heart, Elizabeth came to Joliet and began her high school education at St. Francis Academy in Joliet. On September 5, 1927, Elizabeth entered the postulancy of the Joliet Franciscan Sisters. On August 12, 1928, she was received as a novice and given the name Sister Mary Protase.

Following her first profession, Sister Protase began her ministry of education as a fourth-grade teacher at St. Joseph School in Joliet. She continued as an elementary teacher for twelve years: in Streator, Illinois; Johnstown, Pennsylvania; and Mansfield, Ohio. In 1942 Sister Protase began teaching high school at St. Peter's in Mansfield and taught in several other high schools in Ohio and Illinois. Besides being an energetic teacher, Sister Protase was an avid learner. After receiving a Bachelor's degree from the College of St. Francis in Joliet, Sister Protase received a Master's in Education from DePaul University in Chicago and a Master's in Romance Languages from Western Reserve University in Cleveland. She also studied French at Laval University in Quebec and studied French culture at the Sorbonne in Paris. Sister Protase taught French and Spanish for 14 years at the College of St. Francis. In 1974, Sister Protase went to St. Francis Academy in Joliet where she continued teaching French and Spanish for 14 more years.

Sister Protase loved her teaching. She also had a deep love and appreciation for her religious vocation and community life. She was described as "patient, respectful, charitable, industrious, upright, humble and always willing to lend a hand." Sister Protase was grateful for all the Congregation had done for her, helping her to "grow spiritually and mentally, and for her dear Sisters in religion who have been such an inspiration and edification."

In 1988, after completing 58 years of education, Sister Protase moved to Our Lady of Angels Retirement Home where she continued to be active in making crocheted items for the bazaar, passing mail to sisters who were ill and working in the gift shop. On May 8, 1933 requesting to make final profession, Sister Protase had written: "I will endeavor to become what God wants of me and will continue to do the same until death, when I will go to celebrate my nuptials with my Heavenly Bridegroom, forever in heavenly bliss." On March 16, Sister Protase was admitted to St. Joseph Medical Center for surgery to reset a broken hip. Sister Protase grew weaker and during the early morning hours of March 22, Sister Protase quietly and peacefully went to meet her God.

Sister Protase, we thank you for your dedicated service as an educator and your faithful witness as a Franciscan Sister. We ask that you pray for us, your family, your students, your friends and your Franciscan Sisters, that we, too, may be dedicated in our service and faithful in our witness. May you enjoy the heavenly bliss of living in God's presence, forever. Amen. Alleluia.

