

SISTER M. WILHELMA RAMAEKERS O.S.F. (Marie) 683

Born: November 13, 1899 in St. Bernard, NE
Parents: Henry and Ida (Bothe) Ramaekers
Postulancy: January 16, 1920
Novitiate: August 12, 1920
First Profession: August 12, 1922
Final Profession: August 12, 1925
Died: Wednesday, March 6, 1991 at 11:00 a.m.
at Our Lady of Angels Retirement Home, Joliet



Ministry:

1922 - 1926 St. Joseph, Joliet, IL, Grades 2, 3 & 5
1926 - 1927 St. Mary, Columbus, OH, Grade 5
1927 - 1928 Sacred Heart, Englewood, IL, Grade 6
1928 - 1931 St. John the Baptist, Joliet, IL, Grades 4 & 5
1931 - 1933 St. Joseph, Joliet, IL, Grade 5
1933 - 1936 St. John the Baptist, Joliet, IL, Grades 3, 4 & 5
1936 - 1938 SS. Peter & Paul, Chicago, IL, Grade 5
January 1938 Annunciation, Aurora, IL, Domestic Work & Substitute Teaching
1938 - 1939 St. Michael, Sigel, IL, Domestic Work & Substitute Teaching
1939 - 1940 St. Joseph, Manhattan, IL, Domestic Work & Substitute Teaching
1940 - 1942 St. Joseph, Elgin, IL, Domestic Work & Substitute Teaching
1942 - 1944 St. Bernard, Joliet, IL, Domestic Work
1944 - 1945 Sacred Heart of Jesus, Lillyville, IL, Domestic Work
1945 - 1946 Holy Family, Bayfield, WI, Domestic Work
1946 - 1947 St. Joseph, Pesotum, IL, Domestic Work
1947 - 1948 St. Ludmilla, Chicago, IL, Domestic Work
1948 - 1951 St. Pascal, Chicago, IL, Domestic Work
1951 - 1952 St. Ludmilla, Chicago, IL, Domestic Work
1952 - 1953 St. Mary, Des Plaines, IL, Domestic Work
1953 - 1955 St. Ludmilla, Chicago, IL, Domestic Work
1955 St. Boniface, Chicago, IL, Domestic Work
December SS. Cyril & Methodius, Chicago, IL, Domestic Work
1956 - 1958 Our Lady of Guadalupe, Chicago, IL, Domestic Work
1958 - 1960 Guardian Angel Home, Joliet, IL, Domestic Work
1960 - St. Mary, Columbus, OH, Domestic Work
December College of St. Francis, Joliet, IL, Bakery
1961 - 1962 SS. Cyril & Methodius, Chicago, IL, Domestic Work
1962 - 1964 Guardian Angel Home, Joliet, IL, Domestic Work
1964 - 1967 Our Lady of Angels, Joliet, IL, Charge of Dining Room
1967 - 1968 Guardian Angel Home, Joliet, IL, Domestic Work
1968 - 1971 St. Francis Convent, Joliet, IL, General Assistant
1971 - 1991 Our Lady of Angels, Joliet, IL, Retired

Wake: Friday, March 8, 1991 from 2:00 - 7:00 p.m.
Prayer Service at 4:30 p.m. at Our Lady of Angels, Joliet

Mass of Christian Burial: Friday, March 8, 1991 at 7 p.m.

Burial: Wednesday, March 13, 1991 in Lindsay, Nebraska

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

On Wednesday morning, March 6, 1991, at Our Lady of Angels Retirement Home, our Sister Wilhelma Ramaekers was born to life eternal. At age ninety-one she had long awaited this moment, and death came gently and quietly.

Our Sister Wilhelma was given the name Marie when she was born on November 13, 1899 to Ida and Henry Ramaekers in Lindsay, Nebraska. There were six children in the family, three boys and three girls. From her family she learned the life lessons that come with growing up in a very religious family and a farming community. Her brothers and sisters are all deceased now, but Sister Wilhelma had remained close to her nieces and nephews. Our Sister Julie Ann Borer is her second cousin. Sister Wilhelma's family has requested that she be buried in the family cemetery in Lindsay, Nebraska.

When she was twenty-one years old, Sister Wilhelma became a postulant and she lived to celebrate her Diamond Jubilee of sixty years in 1982. Our archivist tells the story of our Congregation roots in Nebraska. The Franciscan Fathers were in Nebraska, and in 1878 asked our Sisters to open a boarding school in the area. Our sisters remained there until 1882, and had a lasting impact on that farming community. Twelve Sisters have entered our Congregation from Nebraska.

Sister Wilhelma ministered as an elementary school teacher for sixteen years. Some of our Sisters who taught with her recalled how much the children loved her. After suffering an illness she was not able to return to the classroom, but continued her ministry in the role of cook and housekeeper for our sisters. She did this selflessly for thirty-three years until her retirement at Our Lady of Angels in 1971.

At Our Lady of Angels she and her dear friend, Sister Amabilis, were constantly busy crocheting little baskets and candles to help decorate the dining room for different holidays. She could always be counted on to say "yes" to requests to help out in any way she could. Our Sisters have described Sister Wilhelma in words like these: She was a gentle woman, a real lady, kind and quiet and always meticulously clean. She was a very prayerful woman.

She ministered to us, her Sisters, by the witness of her life these past years. We watched her become very frail, and totally dependent on others. Her life became a complete surrender of all she was and all she ever possessed. Truly in her life we see an example of suffering and death not unlike that we remember in the life of Jesus each Lenten season. She will be surprised to know how the witness of her suffering and surrender touched the lives of many people.

Sister Wilhelma, we thank you for your seventy-one years as our Sister. We ask you to remember all of us you loved on earth as you truly experience the joys of life in its fullness. Amen! Alleluia!

