

## IN MEMORIAM



# Sr. Carolyn Henkenius

(Sister M. Fabian)

BORN: November 1921

ENTERED CONGREGATION: January 21, 1937

DIED: December 2, 2015

**W**e gather today to celebrate the life of our dear Sister Carolyn Henkenius, a dedicated Sister of the Precious Blood for seventy-eight years.

Carolyn was born in November 1921 to Charles Henkenius and Emma Forsythe in Ft. Wayne, Indiana. She was the third oldest of ten children. She is survived by her brother, Neil and her sister Charlene both of Ft. Wayne. On January 21, 1937 at the age of fifteen, Carolyn entered the Sisters of the Precious Blood and was given the name of Sister Mary Fabian. Years later she returned to using her baptismal name.

Music was the love of Carolyn's life. In 1957 she received a Bachelor of Science in Music Education at the Athenaeum of Ohio and in 1964 a Bachelor of Arts degree in Liturgical Music at St. Joseph College, Rensselaer, Indiana. For 24 years Sister Carolyn served as a music teacher in Cincinnati, Norwood and Cleveland, Ohio; in Phoenix, Arizona and San Luis Rey, California.

For another 25 years she served as the parish organist as well as a classroom and private piano teacher in Falls Church, Virginia, New Riegel, Ohio and Flint, Michigan. In 1989 she retired at Salem Heights and had the opportunity to serve as organist at the Maria-Joseph Living Care Center, a responsibility that Carolyn took very seriously. In 2001 Sister Carolyn wrote in her ministry reflection, "Playing the organ for the

Holy Sacrifice of the Mass for me is a special privilege. Music enables people to sing and pray together to honor and praise God."

After some illness, when Carolyn was no longer able to play the organ at Mass, her ministry was to live community at Salem Heights, pray for world missions and accept patiently her pain and suffering. In May, 2015 after increased health issues and occurrences of memory loss, she was moved to Emma Hall as a permanent resident.

Carolyn's love of music has brought joy and happiness not only to herself but has touched the hearts of many people of all ages. A friend who took piano lessons from Carolyn admired her for her patience, care and generous gift of time. To show her appreciation, the friend, her husband and daughter took Sister Carolyn to various cultural experiences which she truly loved and enjoyed. The family, too, got much pleasure watching Sister Carolyn with her childlike spirit and animated laughter. They often went to McDonald's afterwards where she ordered her favorite meal ... the quarter pounder and French fries.

In 1993 Carolyn was privileged to take a tour to Austria, Germany and Paris. In 2002, she was invited by Father Charles Kanai, a friend and former chaplain of The Maria Joseph Center, to visit his home country of Kenya, Africa. That trip was truly a highlight of her life!

Sister Carolyn was proud that two of her former students became priests

and a dear friend became a Sister of the Precious Blood. Carolyn's favorite motto was "All for Jesus through Mary." That motto which motivated her to be cheerful, enthusiastic, and generous also inspired others.

"Sharing in all the prayers, talents, rewards and activities of the Sisters means a lot to me," says Sister Carolyn. "To think that I am a member of a Congregation with so many dedicated women makes me feel so happy and grateful."

Early on for relaxation, Carolyn loved to crochet and make quilts. In her later years, especially at Salem Heights, she loved making popcorn and pecan rolls for the Sisters. Red was her favorite color especially during the month of December and she loved playing patriotic songs in the dining room especially when the sisters would gather around and sing.

There's no doubt, Sister Carolyn was a free spirit. She loved the Lord and enjoyed life. When I visited Carolyn on her birthday this past November, I mentioned how pleased I was when I learned that another Sister was having sing-alongs with the residents. I thought Carolyn would also enjoy that time. Instead she said to me, "I'd rather spend time with Jesus." Well, Sister Carolyn, you are with your God that you so loved and honored. We thank you for your presence among us and for the many gifts that you shared with us.

— Sister Cecilia Taphorn, CPPS