

Sister Sheila Prendeville, C.PP.S.

Born: June 29, 1945

Professed: August 10, 1966

Entered into Life: January 8, 2018

Verse on her memorial card:

“O God, you are my God whom I seek; for you, my flesh pines and my soul thirsts.” (Ps. 63:1)



January 12, 2018

Dear Sisters,

At 5:25 A.M. on Jan. 8, the Feast of the Baptism of the Lord, Sr. Sheila Prendeville met face to face with the God whom she was seeking. God fulfilled for her the words she chose for her memorial card: “O God, you are my God whom I seek; for you my flesh pines and my soul thirsts” (Ps. 63).

The older of two children of Lillian (Batman) and Edmond Prendeville, Sr. Sheila was born in St. Louis, MO, on June 29, 1945. She is survived by her younger sister Mary Prendeville. After graduating from Bishop DuBourg High School, Sheila entered our community in August 1963. When she became a novice, she was given the name Sr. John Marie. She professed vows in August 1966.

Sr. Sheila’s educational interests reflect her searching. She received her BA from Fontbonne College in 1968 with a major in philosophy and a minor in history and theology; she received a Master’s in Education/Counseling at St. Louis University in 1972, and another Master’s in religious studies from Mundelein College, Chicago in 1985, writing a thesis entitled “Medieval Women: Mystics and Prophets.”

Education was Sr. Sheila’s initial ministry, first at St. Sabina in Florissant, then at St. Elizabeth Academy. She began working with the elderly at St. Pius V Parish. Feeling a call to contemplative life, Sr. Sheila spent ten months at a Carmelite Monastery in New York. After which, she returned to work at the Cass Catholic Worker House, then as Pastoral Minister at Mary, Queen and Mother in St. Louis.

In 1982, she began a 28-year service as a hospital chaplain at St. John’s Hospital in Springfield, IL, and two years as a volunteer. In 2012, she returned to O’Fallon for a ministry of prayer and presence, living in Alleluia Community, then Brooking Park Assisted Living, and finally St. Joseph Retirement Center/ Mt. Carmel.

In the Spring 2006 issue of *On the Journey*, Sr. Sheila reflected on her 24 years as an evening chaplain at St. John's. "Hospital ministry," she wrote, "is a time of blessing, a truly sacred time. Witnessing the honesty in a struggle of faith, the depth of faith of people across denominations, and the care and love of so many families, friends and staff is humbling and amazing. There is renewed life; there is hope beyond hope; there is an inner strength previously unknown; there is a depth of gratitude not known before, and there is the resilience of the human spirit."

Sr. Sheila's care for the ill and dying continued to manifest itself even as her own health deteriorated. Shortly before Sr. Mary Ann Averbeck's death, I stopped in Sr. Sheila's room and told her I was going to pray with Sr. Mary Ann. Sr. Sheila asked to accompany me. Sr. Mary Ann was not responsive, but Sr. Sheila pulled back Sr. Mary Ann's sheet and held her hand. As we prayed and sang, Sr. Sheila continued to caress Sr. Mary Ann's hand. When I had to leave, Sr. Sheila still wanted to stay. At Sr. Mary Ann's funeral, I reminded Sr. Sheila, "We're here to celebrate the funeral of Sr. Mary Ann. You visited and prayed with her a couple days ago." Hearing this, Sr. Sheila began to cry.

Sr. Sheila requested cremation. Her cremains will be received at 4:30 p.m. on Friday, January 26, 2018, in Precious Blood Chapel followed by Vespers with sharing of memories. Her wake will continue in St. Joseph Chapel on Saturday January 27, 2018, at 10:00 a.m. followed by a Funeral Mass at 11 a.m.

Let us rejoice that Sr. Sheila enjoys the fullness of the God whom she sought.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Sr. Barbara Schlatter". The signature is written in black ink on a light-colored background.

Sr. Barbara Schlatter