

**Sister Ann Clare Hendel, C.PP.S.**

**Born: February 28, 1924**

**Professed: August 10, 1944**

**Entered into Life: October 28, 2017**

Verse on her memorial card:

**“Nos cum prole benedicat Virgo Maria.**

**(May the Virgin Mary bless us with her holy child).”**



October 30, 2017

Dear Sisters,

At 1:47 p.m. on Saturday, October 28, 2017, our Sister Ann Clare Hendel slipped peacefully from this life to her eternal home. She was surrounded by Sisters Estelle Sullentrup, Carol Boschert and Joni Belford; our nurse, Linda Cento; and nurses from Mount Carmel and the hospice agency. As the Sisters sang the final note of the Bridegroom Song, Sister Ann Clare took her last breath, prompting one of the nurses to remark, “You sang her into heaven.”

Born Bertha Mathilda Hendel in Florissant, Missouri, on February 28, 1924, Sister Ann Clare was the eighth of eleven children of Nicholas and Bertha (Albers) Hendel. In a 1992 autobiography, Sister Ann Clare wrote of growing up in their family home / grocery store across the street from Sacred Heart Church. Her father died of pneumonia when she was only 12 years old. She and her siblings helped her mother to carry on the family business which, she wrote, “brought me to an early maturity.”

Sister Ann Clare attended St. Elizabeth Academy (SEA) making a daily trek – 90 minutes each way – via bus and streetcar. After graduation in 1942, she entered our community. Sister Ann Clare earned both Bachelor’s and Master’s degrees in Latin from St. Louis University. In 1968, through a Fulbright Scholarship, she studied the Classics in Rome and in Naples.

Sister Ann Clare taught every grade level from first through twelfth. She served in elementary schools at Assumption, Mattesse; Our Lady Help of Christians, Weingarten; Assumption, Morrison; St. George, St. Louis; and St. Joseph, Martinsburg. She taught Latin at Bishop DuBourg High School and Latin and German at her alma mater, SEA.

When interest in the study of Latin declined, Sister Ann Clare asked to prepare for another ministry, obtaining a license in Religious Studies from Seattle University. She then served in various aspects of pastoral ministry at Holy Innocents Parish, St. Louis; St. John LaLande Parish, Blue Springs; Nativity of the B.V.M. Parish, Independence; and St. Pius X Parish, Moberly. After retiring from parish ministry, Sister Ann Clare volunteered in

numerous capacities at our motherhouse in O'Fallon; at Linda Vista Catholic School, Chesterfield; at St. Elizabeth Convent, and at St. Sabina Parish, Florissant.

Sister Ann Clare appreciated beauty. She loved classical music and played piano, organ and accordion. While serving in Blue Springs and Moberly, she began art lessons and delighted in creating water colors. One of her treasured creative works was a wood etching of the Madonna and Child with the words she chose for her memorial card, "Nos cum prole pia benedicat Virgo Maria" (May the Virgin Mary bless us with her holy child). When she was in the novitiate, these words were the novices' response to the novice directress' nightly blessing, *Benedicere*.

After suffering a heart attack and stroke in August 2016, Sister Ann Clare became a member of St. Joseph Community with residence at Mount Carmel, O'Fallon. The loss of independence and the transition to skilled care was very difficult for her, yet she was always grateful to the nursing staff and to all who visited. As recently as two days before her death she still was able to say, "Thank you for coming." These words from her autobiography reached fulfillment: "The dailyness of giving myself, being Christ to others, has simplified my life. I seem to receive Christ and His loving presence from others in whatever I am doing."

Sister Ann Clare was preceded in death by three sisters and four brothers. She is survived by her brother, Lawrence, and her sisters, Rosemary Vierheller and Mary Ebbesmeyer, as well as many nieces, nephews, great-nieces and nephews, and friends. Let us hold them in prayer as they grieve the loss of her earthly presence.

Sister Ann Clare's body will return to St. Joseph Chapel at 3:30 on Monday, November 6, 2017, and her wake will be from 3:30 – 8:00 p.m., with a Prayer Service of Thanksgiving at 7:00 p.m. Her wake will continue on Tuesday, November 7, 2017, from 9 – 10:45 a.m. with her Funeral Mass at 11 a.m., all in St. Joseph Chapel.

Her profession classmate, Sister Estelle Sullentrup, tells of Sister Ann Clare's insistence upon a then-popular song for their jubilee celebration. The words Sister Estelle recalls are, "We will always remember you and keep you in our hearts." Sister Ann Clare, we will remember you and keep you in our hearts – and we trust you will do the same for us. May you rest now in the arms of the Virgin Mary and her holy child.

Benedicere,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Sr. Janice".

Sr. Janice Bader