

Sister Gregory Heggemann, C.PP.S.

Born: December 26, 1926

Professed: August 10, 1950

Entered into Life: August 14, 2018

Verse on her memorial card:

“No one knows, however, when that day and hour will come, neither the angels nor the Son, the Father alone knows.” (Matthew 24:36)

August 15, 2018

Dear Sisters,



“No one knows when that day and hour will come. . . the Father alone knows” (Matt. 24:36). This scripture verse which Sister Gregory chose for her memorial card certainly befits the circumstances of her death. Shortly before 10:45 p.m. on Tuesday, August 14, 2018, God called Sister Gregory to her heavenly home. Though she was growing weaker over these past months, as recently as Saturday, Sister Gregory was able to go outside with Sister Joann Fischer to enjoy the flowers.

Born and baptized on December 26, 1926, in Concord Hill, Missouri, Geneva Heggemann was the fourth of nine children of Edward and Minnie (Sickman) Heggemann. Growing up on the family farm, she learned the discipline of hard work and the importance of trust in God who provides the harvest.

In her short autobiography she wrote, “I first felt the call to religious life when I was in the hospital and saw how human and natural the Sisters seemed to be. I fought my vocation a long time and tried to get rid of the idea. About eighteen months later I found myself entering the novitiate.” Sister Gregory became a novice in 1948 and professed vows in 1950.

Sister Gregory was a cook and homemaker; her delicious meals provided a wonderful sense of “home” in every place that she served. Whether preparing a gourmet meal for the Archbishop or Saturday night pizza (often made with the week’s shrewdly disguised leftovers) for the Sisters, her nutritious, made-from-scratch meals were the high point of any day. Her homemade bread and desserts were to-die-for delicious.

Sister Gregory served at St. Agnes, Bloomsdale; Holy Family, St. Elizabeth Academy, St. Domenico Home, St. Monica, and the Archbishop’s Residence, all in St. Louis; St. Henry, Charleston; St. Joseph, Omaha, NE; and Sacred Heart, Florissant. In 2002 she retired from full-time ministry, and in 2017 she moved to skilled care at Mount Carmel.

Sister Gregory wrote that her happiest years were those at St. Elizabeth Academy where she cooked for the Sisters and some 500 students. The students loved her and would greet her enthusiastically as they went through the cafeteria line. She would ask them about their favorite foods, and those favorites soon would show up on the menu – there were none of the usual complaints about “cafeteria food.”

Although St. Elizabeth Academy may have been her favorite, she also became very attached to the children at St. Domenico Home. When she left there for Charleston, she missed the children so much that the Sisters teased her about giving her a bed sheet for a handkerchief because her tears were so abundant. She was in Charleston for only four and a half months before being reassigned to St. Domenico. A wonderful photo of her with the children was included in a recent exhibit of Catholic Sisters at the St. Louis Public Library; her love for the children and theirs for her is readily evident.

Sister Gregory was also well-loved for her service at the Archbishop's Residence in St. Louis. In addition to the fabulous meals that Sisters Gregory and Arilda provided, they cared for Archbishop May during his final illness. After Archbishop May's death, Bishop Lucas wrote to Sister Andrée, the superior at that time, "The Archbishop was able to remain at home in familiar surroundings during these months due in no small measure to the patience and attention of the Sisters."

In addition to her culinary skills, Sister Gregory also was an expert seamstress, quilter and knitter. The works of her hands are countless! In addition to sewing her own clothes, she knitted and crocheted scarves, hats, sweaters and baby items for sisters, family and friends.

Sister Gregory's body will return to St. Joseph Chapel at 3:30 p.m. on Friday, August 17, 2018, and her wake will be from 3:30 – 8 p.m., with a Prayer Service of Thanksgiving at 7 p.m. Her wake will continue Saturday, August 18, 2018, from 9 – 10:45 a.m. with her Funeral Mass at 11 a.m., all in St. Joseph Chapel. I am sure she is pleased to know that Bishop Gaydos will celebrate the Mass per her request.

Sister Gregory is survived by her brother, Jerome; a sister-in-law, Mary Ann; nieces and nephews to the third generation. Please remember them in prayer as well as Sister Alice Falk, the only remaining member of her profession class.

Prayer was always an integral part of Sister Gregory's day. She loved spending time in St. Joseph Chapel and Precious Blood Chapel. After moving to Mount Carmel, she was no longer able to go to chapel on her own. So, in the tradition of our founding Sisters, she would spend her prayer time sitting near the door looking toward the chapel. While she could not see the sanctuary lamp, like our early Sisters did, she knew God's closeness. And now, her hour has come, and she sees God face to face.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Sr. Janice Bader". The ink is dark and the handwriting is fluid and personal.

Sister Janice Bader