



SISTERS OF ST. FRANCIS

PO Box 100 OLDENBURG, IN 47036

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FACEBOOK: FRANCISCAN SISTERS OF OLDENBURG



January 10, 2018

S. WILHELMINA BURKEMPER, OSF

Dear Sisters, Associates, Co-Workers, Family and Friends,

Very early in the morning on the feast of the Epiphany (and the Founding Day of the Sisters of St. Francis), Sister Wilhelmina Burkemper slipped quietly into the arms of the God who loves her. I am confident that she was singing the words to the song she chose for the opening of her funeral liturgy, Center of My Life. No doubt, she was joined by our foundress Mother Theresa, her parents, deceased family members and all the saints proclaiming, "I will always praise You, I will always serve You, I will always keep You in my sight."

Wilhelmina (Virginia Rose) was born on January 25, 1924. She was the sixth of ten children born to Alexander and Rose (Wehde) Burkemper in Old Monroe, Missouri. She recounted in her autobiography that the parish church and school were visible from their house. The children walked the railroad tracks to school. She noted that after a few years some of them, including herself, were able to walk the entire way balancing on the rails. Wilhelmina kept that spirit of adventure and daring her entire life!

The faith of her parents and family, as well as the Sisters who taught her in school, fostered her vocation to religious life. Early in the morning on January 2, 1940, Wilhelmina boarded the train with Sister Ligouri to come to Oldenburg. She remembered that it was snowing the entire way but they arrived safely at the Motherhouse that evening. She met her classmates and settled into the routine of convent life. After her formation at Oldenburg, Wilhelmina began her teaching career. She taught primary grades for 49 years in Ohio, Missouri, and Montana. She loved working with young children.

After her retirement from teaching, she accepted the position of Archivist for the Community. In her autobiography, she described that work saying "This journey to the past and meeting all the Sisters has filled me with awe and wonder at the courage and faith, dedication and perseverance that has brought me this far." Wilhelmina enjoyed learning about the past and sharing that information with others. She embraced the heritage of our Community and strove to live the values of our ancestors every day of her life.

We extend our sympathy to Wilhelmina's family. We offer our condolences to her classmates: Sisters Virginia Ann Streit and Mildred Speed. We promise prayers and support to her many friends.

We are grateful for all who cared for Wilhelmina, especially the St. Clare Hall nursing staff and the pastoral care team.

As we remember Wilhelmina and celebrate her life, let us keep in mind the words that she chose for the first reading at her funeral liturgy: “The souls of the righteous are in the hands of God ... they will receive great good ... because God found them worthy.” (Wisdom 3:1-5) We are confident that our loving God was pleased to welcome Wilhelmina home. She truly was a gentle woman ... worthy of great good!

With love and gratitude,



Sister Mary Beth Gianoli, OSF
for the General Council

SISTER WILHELMINA (Virginia Rose) BURKEMPER

Birth: January 25, 1924
Entrance into Religious Life: January 2, 1940
Entrance into Eternal Life: January 6, 2018

MISSIONS AT WHICH S. WILHELMINA SERVED:

1942-1945	St. Bonaventure, Cincinnati OH
1945-1947	Our Lady of Sorrows, Kansas City MO
1947-1955	Our Lady of Perpetual Help, Cincinnati OH
1955-1958	Our Lady of Victory, Cincinnati OH
1958-1959	St. Clement, Bowling Green MO
1959-1963	St. Joseph Nazareth, Cincinnati OH
1963-1965	Sacred Heart, Troy MO
1965-1969	St. Xavier, MT
1969-1974	St. Charles, Pryor MT
1974-1979	Sacred Heart, Troy MO
1979-1991	Immaculate Conception, Old Monroe MO
1991-2007	Archives, Oldenburg IN
2007-2018	Motherhouse, Oldenburg IN

Funeral arrangements have been entrusted to Weigel Funeral Home – visit their website to view Sister’s online memorial, and if desired, an online condolence may be left on the site to share with her family and the Franciscan Sisters – www.Weigelfh.com

Memorial Donations in Sister’s memory may be given online at www.OldenburgFranciscans.org