

May 11, 1999

“I will come to the altar of God, the God of my joy.”
(from Psalm 43 of Morning Praise for Tuesday of Week 2)

Dear Sisters,

This morning, shortly after 7:00 a.m., our dear Sister Irmlinde was called home by the God of her joy. Sister shared in all the activities of the community until last Thursday evening when she experienced great difficulty breathing. On Friday afternoon she took a decided turn for the worse. At that time, one of her dear priest friends was in the house for Sister Walburgis' funeral. It was a loving act of Providence that he was able to bring her Viaticum just before the ambulance took Sister to St. Joseph Hospital where she died a few days later.



Sister M. Irmlinde - Gertrude Gueldenberg
Born: September 2, 1906 in Bottrop, Germany
Professed: February 3, 1928
Died: May 11, 1999 in Reading, PA

Sister Irmlinde grew up in the diocese of Muenster and entered our congregation in 1926. She was missioned to the U.S.A. during her canonical novitiate year and arrived in New York on November 18, 1927.

In the first three years after her profession, Sister Irmlinde was sent to the communities of SS. Cyril & Methodius in Reading and St. John's in Allentown where she served her sisters as a homemaker. At the same time, she took some courses in dietetics.

The latter prepared Sister for her next assignment as the supervisor of food services at St. Joseph's Health Resort in Wedron, IL. Sister Irmlinde's ministry in Wedron was varied and extensive. In the course of forty-seven years, she learned the art of massage and worked tirelessly in the physical therapy department. Wedron became her life and her love. She is still remembered with gratitude and admiration by guests and co-workers.

When the sisters were withdrawn from Wedron in 1978, Sister Irmlinde returned to St. Michael's and lovingly cared for our sisters who had special dietary needs. She was able to do this until 1985 when our main kitchen staff had expanded sufficiently to allow them to absorb the special dietary needs of the communities of St. Michael's and Holy Family Center.

Even in retirement Sister Irmlinde kept very busy supplying the community with her famous cookies. We were blessed with delicious cookies for every possible special occasion. When Sister had to give up this practice, we all felt as though a special era in the life of St. Michael's and Holy Family had come to an end. Until very recently Sister remained very interested and concerned that the sisters received treats for special occasions. It was her way of contributing to the life of the community and of being of service to her sisters whom she loved dearly.

Sister Irmlinde remained an active member of St. Michael's until she joined Holy Family Center shortly after celebrating her 70th jubilee of profession. It was a great joy for Sister to have her sister Agnes and her niece as well as friends from Wedron join us for that occasion.

We are grateful to Sister Irmlinde for her many years of love and service to our congregation. She will be buried during the retreat which is being held in preparation for our Province Jubilee celebration. After the Mass of Christian Burial which will be celebrated at 3:30 p.m. on Friday, May 14, 1999, Sister Irmlinde will be laid to rest in our convent cemetery.

United in Jesus' love,

Sister Marie Clark, m.s.c.