



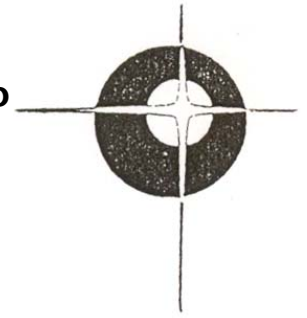
**“My soul is thirsting for the Living God.”  
--Psalm 63:1**

**SISTER AGNES (M. CLEMENTIA) FASNACHT, SSND**

May 24, 1920

July 20, 1942

March 22, 2009



At 6:55 a.m., on Sunday, March 22, our beloved Sister Agnes Fasnacht died peacefully at Good Counsel Provincial House. Sister Elaine Guerber was with her at the time of her death, and her niece, Sister Carolyn Fasnacht, had been keeping vigil with her during the days preceding her death.

The funeral Mass for Sister Agnes, with Father Syl Brown as presider, and her grandnephew Father Matthew Fasnacht as con-celebrant, will be on March 26 at 10:30 a.m. The vigil service is at 7:00 p.m. the preceding evening. Burial will follow in our cemetery. Loving sympathy to her nieces and nephews and their families, and her sisters in community, the School Sisters of Notre Dame. The last surviving member of her immediate family, she was preceded in death by her parents, John and Elizabeth (Hartung) Fasnacht, brothers Tony, Clement, Father James, Ernest and Benedict, and sisters Marie, Sister M. Sanctina, SSND (Cecilia), Esther, Sister M. Gertrude, SSND (Mathilda), and Marcella Conway.

Sister Agnes, the youngest of eleven children, was born May 24, 1920, on a farm about one mile north of Madison Lake, Minnesota, to a pioneer Madison Lake family. Her grandparents, Paul and Mary Fasnacht, had settled in Madison Lake in 1856. A week after her birth, Father Arthur Dittman baptized her Agnes Elizabeth at All Saints Church. Sister Agnes wrote of her early family life, “As soon as I could say a few words, my good mother taught me my prayers. I spent over six years under the guidance of my mother and dad who made many sacrifices for me, and brought me up in the true Catholic way.” Family prayer was important, and the entire family often prayed the rosary together in the evening.

At the age of seven, she started school at All Saints, and had School Sisters of Notre Dame as her teachers. Several of her older brothers and sisters also attended All Saints at this time. Many years later, in response to letters from current All Saints students, she wrote about her school days: “I lived on a farm so we had to walk every day to school and back home again – a good mile for us each way. . . .In those days, I would hang around after school to help the sisters. I guess I was a pet. . . .We always had to take our own lunch to school. My mother saw to it that we had a nourishing lunch with us. Of course, when we got home, something ‘special’ was waiting for us.”

In third grade, she received her First Solemn Communion and also the sacrament of Confirmation. She remembered that when she was in 7<sup>th</sup> grade, Father Alton Scheid visited and encouraged girls to think about coming to Good Counsel Academy, even though All Saints had a high school at that time.

All Saints high school closed after Agnes' eighth grade year, and she attended Madison Lake Public School for ninth grade. She begged her parents for permission to attend Good Counsel, and her plea was heard. In September 1936, she became a member of the GCA sophomore class.

During her senior year, Agnes felt the call to SSND, and confirmed this in a May interview with Mother Andrina. Sister Agnes wrote, "Her encouraging welcome made me very happy." She continued, "Sometime in the middle of June, I told my two Notre Dame sisters, M. Sanctina and M. Gertrude, about my plans. They were delighted, and my Reverend brother, Father James, too, was very glad to hear of my decision." She entered the candidature in August 1939, and spent her second year in the candidature as an assistant cook at St. Agnes in St. Paul. At her reception into the Novitiate in July 1941, she received the name Mary Clementia, after one of her brothers. (She returned to her baptismal name in the late 1960's.)

Following Profession in 1942, she served as homemaker at a number of convents in Minnesota including St. Stanislaus, Corpus Christi and Guadalupe in St. Paul; Comfrey, Madelia, Albertville, North Mankato, Shakopee, Prior Lake, St. Peter, Red Wing, Madison Lake, Mapleton, Wanda, and Good Counsel. At Good Counsel she worked for a number of years in the sewing department and the host department, and also helped with the cleaning and maintenance work for the Catholic Charities Offices when those offices were on the Hill. Three of her recipes were published in the 1947 SSND Centenary Cookbook.

She retired from active ministry in 1982, but still continued to help with basic sewing needs. She also spent time crocheting. It was during her retirement years that she rediscovered reading. At first hesitant to begin a book, she later became an avid reader of both spiritual and fiction books and had a book with her wherever she went – including the chapel.

In 1986, on the occasion of Sister Gertrude's and Father James' 50<sup>th</sup> anniversaries, the three Fasnacht SSNDs and their priest brother were featured in articles commemorating over 200 years of service to the church. The family was again highlighted in 1992 when Sister Agnes celebrated her golden jubilee.

The spiritual values from her home stayed with her throughout her life. As long as she was able, she helped lead the rosary in the health care chapel, and often prayed for priests and seminarians. Family, too, was very important to her, and this was evidenced by the frequent visits of nieces and nephews, and grandnieces and nephews, too. She especially looked forward to visits from the youngest members of the family and delighted in the little children. A special joy for her was attending the diaconate ordination (2006) and first Mass (2007) of her grandnephew Matthew in Janesville. She also expressed her happiness that her niece Carolyn had followed her to the School Sisters of Notre Dame.

May Sister Agnes, who thirsted for the living God throughout her life of 88 years, now be enjoying the everlasting joys of heaven.