



Sisters of St. Casimir

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**SISTER MILDA BLINSTRUBAS, SSC
(formerly Sister M. Jacinta)
October 2, 1932 – February 15, 2021**

Milda (Ann Marie) Blinstrubas, the daughter of Stasys Blinstrubas and Anna Marie Maurush, was born in Klaipeda, Lithuania, on October 2, 1932. Milda and her family were forced to flee their homeland when she was 12 years old because the Russian Army was closing in on Lithuania.

As Sister Milda was preparing for her golden jubilee of religious profession in 2001 she reflected on her early experiences and wrote: "I remember the bombs and the fires. I couldn't sleep nights and there was no peace. Living in Germany during the war years, I experienced the hardships of refugee life. The only bright spot in my life at the time was the sight of the Sisters who would come occasionally to the refugee camp to minister to the sick. I was fascinated by them and followed them at a distance." She left Germany in January 1948 and arrived, unaccompanied, in the United States shortly afterwards. She came to Chicago, finding lodging with Mr. and Mrs. Skelly, Sister M. Leandra's aunt and uncle, about four blocks from the Motherhouse. She often walked around the neighborhood, saw the Motherhouse, and tried to get a glimpse of the Sisters walking on the Motherhouse grounds. She wanted to be with them. And so, on September 8, 1948, Milda Blinstrubas, entered the congregation of the Sisters of St. Casimir as a postulant.



On August 15, 1949, Milda began her novitiate, receiving the name Sister Jacinta. On August 15, 1951, Sister Jacinta made her first vows. Thus began her life of ministry and service within the church, which took her to six states – Indiana, Illinois, New Mexico, California, Florida, and Maryland. She began as a kindergarten teacher, then second grade, and, discovering while teaching second grade that many of the children could not read, she set out on a mission: she

would make sure every student she taught would learn to read and she would do this with first graders. She did just that for over 50 years, touching countless lives.

Sister Milda received her Bachelor's in Education from Marywood in Scranton, PA, in 1976, but had much on-the-job training, seeing what worked and what did not work with her students, and applying that to each new situation. Each year of teaching provided the foundation for the next. All that she learned proved most beneficial to her students who all learned to read.

On reflecting on her Diamond Jubilee, Sister Milda wrote: "I believe in the Chinese proverb: 'Give a person a fish, you feed him for a day; teach a person how to fish, you feed him for a lifetime.' My proverb is: 'Teach a child to read and you have taught him/her for a lifetime.' God in his wisdom knew that it was here (with the Sisters of St. Casimir) that I could best use my gifts to serve him and help others, especially children."

After Sister Milda retired from full-time teaching, she tutored students as part of a special Archdiocesan program. Her supervisor, Leah Duszynski, wrote this about Sister Milda, and the work she did in this program: "She most certainly was a very special lady. She worked with each of our children no matter how challenging the task and always met success." But Sister Milda still had time and energy to do more. She never stopped offering her services, doing church linens and various household tasks, assisting her elderly aunt, doing whatever was asked of her. Whatever she did, was done to perfection.

Sister Milda eventually found family in the Chicago area with whom she became very close, including her uncle and aunt, Bronius and Eugenija Blinstrubai, cousins, nieces and nephews, and wherever she ministered, she developed lifelong friendships. She enjoyed family gatherings, travel with friends, nature, and operas. She appreciated visits from those she loved and enjoyed life with them. Community, family and friends stayed close to her during the five years she lived at Mother Theresa Home in Lemont, IL, her last home on earth. She will be missed.

Well done, good and faithful servant, Sister Milda. We are grateful for your life among us and the life you shared with us. May our loving God welcome you home.

Lovingly prepared by Sister Margaret Zalot



Sister Milda is survived by her sister-in-law, Irena Blinstrubas (wife of Rimantas) of Downers Grove, IL, niece, Roma Kaveckas, and nephews, Richard Blinstrubas, Robert Blinstrubas, and Peter Blinstrubas, her cousins, Daiva Panaras, Severina Juskas, John Rejeris, Tony Rejeris, Rita Bezdicek and Viktoras Sekmakas and dear friends who were like family to her, including Georgina and Charles Winters (Northbrook, IL), Birute and David Blevins (Westchester, IL), Natividad Manalo (Doral, FL), and the Sisters of St. Casimir.

Her father, Stasys Blinstrubas, mother, Anna Marie Maurush, her adoptive parents (uncle and aunt), Bronius and Eugenija Blinstrubai, her brothers (cousins), Rimantas (Ray) Blinstrubas and Paul Blinstrubas, and her goddaughter, Lisa Blinstrubas, preceded her in death.

Living member of Sister Milda's Profession Class of August 15, 1951:

Sister M. Leandra Yerkes

Deceased Members of Sister Milda's Profession Class of August 15, 1951

Sister Julie Shainauskas

Sister M. Dolorosa Wertelka

Sister Helen Therese Gestautas

Sister Mary Grace Winslow

Sister Michaeline Pakrosnis

Members of the Sisters of St. Casimir

**Rites of Christian Burial
Saturday, March 20, 2021**

Nativity BVM Church

69th and S Washtenaw Ave Chicago IL

Visitation and Wake Service: 10:00 a.m.

Mass of the Resurrection: 11:00 a.m.

Celebrant: Rev. Anthony Markus

Organist: Gia Sokas

Interment: Saint Casimir Cemetery, family plot

Sister Milda asked to be cremated. Funeral services will be livestreamed from Nativity BVM Church.

**Funeral Director: Donald Petkus
Petkus Funeral Home**

