



Sisters of St. Casimir

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Sister M. Delphine Grigas June 20, 1916 – October 11, 2020

Helen Dorothy Grigas, our beloved Sister Delphine, was born on June 20, 1916 into a loving and caring family with a deep faith life. Her parents, Dominic and Theophila Grigas, were Lithuanian immigrants, settling first in Nanticoke, PA where Helen was born and baptized. Shortly after the family moved to Shenandoah, PA. Helen had five brothers—Anthony, Bernard, William, John, and Joseph—and three sisters--Alberta, Mary, and Casimira (who entered the Sisters of St. Casimir and professed her vows as Sister Vivian). All of her siblings preceded her in death.



Helen attended Washington Grammar School and J.W. Cooper High School. Life was centered around the Church and parish activities. She sang in the children's choir, was enrolled in the Sodality, and was a member of the Junior Knights of Lithuania which she said was a wonderful outlet for a healthy social life.

Of her call to religious life, Sister Delphine wrote, "My religious vocation did not come to me in a clear cut manner as if etched in stone or a trumpet call, sounding loud and clear; neither did it come in the very early years of my life. A variety of events, specific movements of the heart, a few significant relationships, and mostly the goodness and generosity of God's graces contributed, all seemingly coming together during my later high school years. One of those events was my own sister's entrance to the Sisters of St. Casimir, plus a budding relationship through correspondence with my newly re-discovered godmother, Sister Petronella, SSC, in one way or another, led me to make my final decision. I was then 22 years of age."

She entered the community in 1938 and professed her first vows on August 15, 1941 as Sister Delphine. She had the joy of celebrating her Silver jubilee in 1966, her Golden Jubilee in 1991, and her Diamond Jubilee (75 years) in 2016.

Sister Delphine received a BS in Education from Marywood in Scranton PA, but throughout her long life she was a life-long learner, later receiving certification as a Pastoral Minister from a program at Mercy Hospital in Chicago, and taking part in many

educational opportunities to enhance her ministerial skills and talents in education (music for elementary school teachers, discipline rights of pupils and rights of teachers), spirituality and pastoral care (healing prayer, death and dying by Elizabeth Kubler Ross, patients' feelings and views on terminal illness, adult education of Scripture, evangelization).

For thirty-five years, Sister Delphine taught children in grades one through eight in eight different states: Illinois (Immaculate Conception School in Brighton Park, St. Anthony School in Cicero, St. Peter in Volo, St. Norbert School in Northbrook, and St. Pius in Stickney); Pennsylvania (St. Casimir School in Philadelphia, St. Francis School and St. George School in Shenandoah); Massachusetts (St. Casimir School in Worcester); Maryland (St. Joan of Arc School in Aberdeen); Florida (St. Clement School in Fort Lauderdale); California (St. Casimir School in Los Angeles); Rhode Island (St. Casimir School in Providence); and New Mexico (Our Lady of Guadalupe School). Of her years in this important ministry of education, Sister Delphine wrote, "Every child I taught, every new class I had, every state I lived in, enriched my life in some way. As I gave, so also, I received."

After 35 years of teaching, Sister Delphine felt that God was preparing her for a different ministry, that of pastoral care. She moved to the Motherhouse in 1975 and began preparing for her work in pastoral care where she would minister to the sick and those who were dying and give support to their families. In all that was part of her preparation she said, "I had to evaluate myself and be evaluated, not only as a religious, but even more as a baptized Christian."

After eight years at Holy Cross Hospital, Sister Delphine's following years were spent in a number of different parish settings: at St. Bartholomew in Waukegan as secretary, at St. Norbert in Northbrook in tutoring and Adult Education, at Sacred Heart in New Philadelphia as secretary and participating in the RCIA program and the Little Rock Scripture Studies, at St. Joseph Home in Holland PA as assistant to the Social Worker, at St. Bede Parish in Holland PA assisting in the CCD program, and at St. Helena Parish in Hobbs, New Mexico as a catechist.

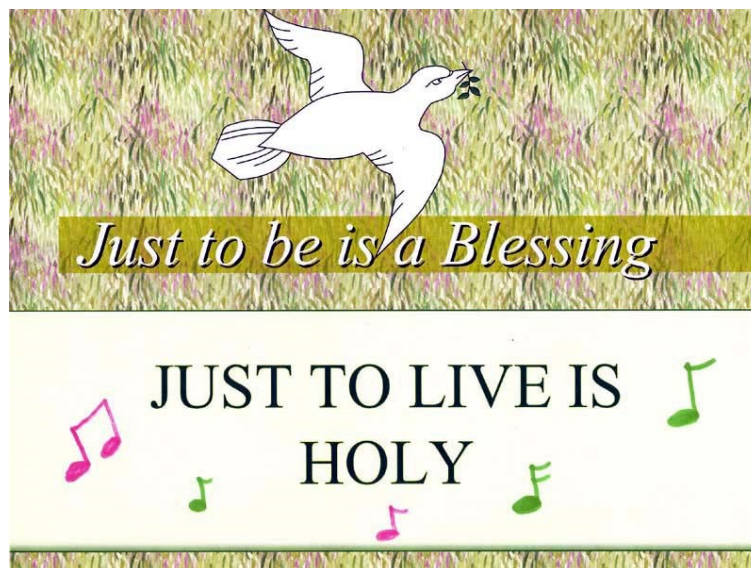
Throughout her entire life, Sister Delphine was willing to do whatever she could, adjusting not only to the changes in her health and energy level, but also to the needs that she saw around her. She wrote, "There is a time to do something, and a time to let go of something, especially when unable to continue in the same capacity." She was always open to learning new things and growing in her spiritual life. As a team member in Search, an intense spiritual weekend for teens, she said she learned "to pray spontaneously with those enthusiastic young people and to share with them a deeper faith dimension." With a strong desire to share with others what she had found helpful in her own spiritual life, Sister Delphine put together and published *Heavenly Sense*, a collection of inspirational sayings. She valued her month-long sabbatical experience in

Adrian, MI and the privilege of going to the Holy Land in celebration of her Golden Jubilee.

The last years of Sister Delphine's life were spent at Franciscan Village where she continued her ministry of prayer and presence. Many loved to visit with her. Even when she was confined to bed, she remained alert and attentive to all that was going on. She always had a few jokes at hand to share with whoever visited. She often would say to someone, "I love you and there's nothing you can do about it." She valued the friendships she had formed over the years. One very special one was with Dr. James Klein whom she got to know at Holy Cross Hospital. She became part of his wonderful family who welcomed her and accompanied her in the many stages of her life and prepared a memorable gala celebration of Sister Delphine's 100th birthday.

Sister Delphine had a strong character and determination to keep going. She lived a very rich and fulfilling life, touching the hearts and lives of many people. As she celebrated one of her milestone birthdays, she wrote, "Most importantly was God's gift of time (and still is) reminding me to cherish every moment because it will never come again, while at the same time, will lead me into Eternity, the ever present now!" and again, "Besides my family I count among my blessings the Sisters I have lived with in community, faithful friends and relatives. To me they are and continue to be part of the fabric of my life."

We are grateful to all who loved Sister Delphine and were part of her life. In a special way we thank Sister Bernadette Marie, Sister Theresa Dabulis and Sister Janine who attended to many of Sister Delphine's needs, Juanita, pastoral care at Franciscan Village, who prayed with her, all our Sisters who shared life with her and visited with her, and all those who cared for her at Mother Theresa Home. We are grateful to God for the blessing of Sister Delphine. May she know the fullness of joy in God's presence forever.



Sister Delphine was preceded in death by her parents, Dominic and Theophila Grigas, her sisters, Sister Vivian Grigas, Alberta Toborowsky, Mary Shuck, and brothers Bernard, Anthony, William, John, and Joseph. She leaves behind many nieces, nephews, relatives, and friends.

Deceased members of Sister Delphine's Profession Class:

Sister M. Felix Kalaina
Sister M. Rosalinda Grigonis
Sister M. Helen Eremich
Sister Helen Misiunas
Sister M. Maura Wierbicki
Sister M. Antonilla Utko
Sister Marion B. Panke

Visitation and Wake Service:

Nativity BVM Church
69th and S. Washtenaw Ave., Chicago, IL
Friday, October 16, 2020
Visitation 10:00 – 11:00 a.m.
Wake Service 10:30 a.m.

Mass of the Resurrection:

Nativity BVM Church
69th and S. Washtenaw Ave., Chicago, IL
Friday, October 16, 2020 at 11:00 a.m.

Celebrant: Rev. Bob Lucas, CM
Organist: Richard Sokas
Interment: Saint Casimir Cemetery
Funeral Director: David Gaidas

