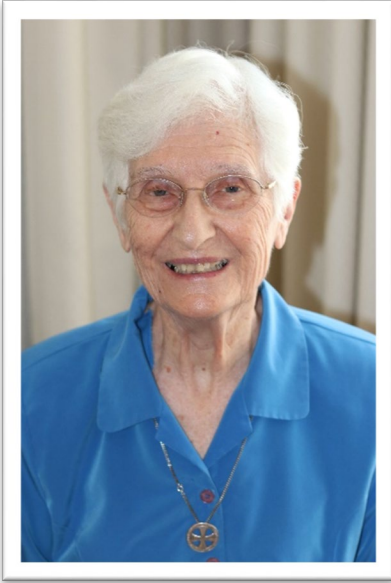


Reflections on the Life of Sister Barbara Miller

March 7, 1935 – August 29, 2023



Sister Barbara Miller was born in Cleveland, Ohio, on March 7, 1935. Her parents were Joseph T. Miller and Catherine (Dugas) Miller. The family lived in Parma, Ohio until she was twelve years old. They moved to Phoenix, Arizona for her mother's health and the family grew up there. Her brother, Martin Miller, with whom Barbara would often go to meditate, sister Kathy (Miller) Gobins, and her sister-in-law, Betty Ann Miller all live in Arizona. Her brothers Joseph and Larry and sister Margaret preceded her in death. She has nieces and nephews, grandnieces and nephews.

Barbara had wanted to be a sister from first grade. (Her aunt was an Adrian Dominican.) Barbara was quite a swimmer and softball player while a student at Xavier High School in Phoenix. Barbara competed in the Olympics as a swimmer and won several medals. She almost changed her mind about entering when she thought about college and sports. She ultimately persisted in her original desire to be a sister, as she said – because “God won out!”

She entered on April 9, 1954, lived two months in the Casa in Tucson, and then moved on to the novitiate in Greensburg. From there she embarked on teaching ministry in Arizona, California, Pittsburgh, Seton Hill, and then onto vocation ministry in Arizona, as an addiction counselor, teacher/counselor, and finally Pastoral Assistant back in Swissvale, PA.

Barbara was prepared for ministry with a BA at Seton Hill, MA at the University of Arizona, a Ph.D. at Notre Dame and any courses that would support her ministry in new ways. Barbara's dissertation focus was “The Role of Women in the Mexican Christero Rebellion.” She lived in Mexico and contacted folks who lived through it and researched the original history. Three publications from her research are available.

In celebrating her golden jubilee she expressed, “My vocation to religious life has been a great gift to me. I have had the opportunity to grow in my love for God and to be of service to God’s people. Without the support of my community this would not have been possible.”

Believe it or not Barbara always liked to have fun!! She loved nature, was always ready for a hike or a sled ride. She loved following the Steelers even in the dark night of tracking down where they were getting on a bus to transfer to another hotel when they were in Phoenix!

Barbara wrote, “When I was in Arizona, Texas, and Mexico I grew up to love the Latino people. While I was on mission in Arizona, I worked with the Latino immigrants: taking food to the men working in the orange groves, driving them to the doctor, and leading Communion services for them in jail.”

Returning to Greensburg in 2004, Barbara worked a few days a week in the Seton Hill University archives, and she kept her association with Casa San Jose in Brookline teaching Latinos English. At Caritas Christi she was ready to play Rummikub, bat balloons and more. Barbara has said, “What I love most of all is being with my friends and making new friends.”

Sister Barbara was involved with the Alzheimer Disease Research Center by consenting to donate her brain when she died to the Center for Research. The brain donation helps researchers use brain tissues to better understand the causes of and treatment options for Alzheimer’s disease and related dementia that affect millions of people. Sister Barbara recognized the significance of being a part of the donation program which is important in making a difference in the future.

Sister Barbara, we rejoice with you as you enter the fulness of eternal life with Elizabeth Seton, the Company of Charity and your loved ones. Be at peace.

Written by Sister Mary Ann Winters
Read by Sister Marian Grace Brandt