



Sr. Mary Avila Labiak, CSSF

Sr. Mary Avila, Helen Labiak of Toledo, Ohio, age 94 and a religious for 77 years, entered eternal life Jan. 5 in St. Joseph Care Center in Livonia. Born Sept. 7, 1918, Helen was the third of four children of Lawrence and Anna (Szymanowski).

Following in the footsteps of her sister, the late Sr. Mary Noel Labiak, CSSF, she was admitted into the Felician Congregation and given the name Sr. Mary Avila in religious life. She pronounced final vows on Aug. 2, 1944.

Sr. Mary Avila received a Bachelor of Science degree from Nazareth College and a Master of Arts degree from the Catholic University of America. From the onset of her teaching ministry, Sister displayed an aptitude for financial skills. She utilized these skills in teaching commercial classes at Felician schools throughout Michigan: St. Hyacinth, St. Casimir, St. Josephat, St. Andrew — all in Detroit; Our Lady Queen of Apostles and St. Florian, Hamtramck; Our Lady of Mt. Carmel, Wyandotte; St. Stanislaus, Bay City; St. Joseph, Manistee; and Ladywood High School, Livonia.

In 1969, leaving a teaching profession of 33 years, Sr. Avila was assigned as provincial bursar of the Livonia Province, and in 1990 was elected provincial treasurer. She served as the senior financial adviser for the last 13 years.

The Mass of Resurrection was celebrated by Auxiliary Bishop Francis Reiss on Jan. 8. Fr. Timothy Babcock, chaplain, concelebrated. Burial was in Holy Sepulchre Cemetery, Southfield.