

## SISTER MARY MICHAEL BURKE

1896 - 1975

Agnes Bridget Burke was born in Chicago, Illinois on February 4, 1896 and was baptized at St. Mary Church, Chicago by the Reverend P. C. Conway on February 16, 1896. She received the Sacrament of Confirmation at Holy Redeemer Church, Detroit, the Most Reverend John S. Foley officiating. Agnes was of Irish ancestry, the only child of Michael Anthony Burke and Margaret Crawley, both of whom were born in Ireland. She entered the community on August 15, 1914 and was clothed in the Holy Habit on December 29, 1914, receiving the name Sister Mary Michael. She made her temporary vows on December 28, 1916 and her final vows on December 30, 1919. She had a number of relatives who had religious vocations, among whom were Sister Emeline O'Brien, I.H.M.; Sister Johnita Boland, I.H.M., and Sister Caritas Naughton, I.H.M.

Sister attended Holy Redeemer Elementary School and was a graduate of St. Vincent High School. She was certified as a teacher by Michigan State Normal College in 1924 and in 1926 she earned her B.A. degree. In 1947 she received her M.Ed. from Wayne State University. She attended classes during the summer taking various courses. She enrolled in Library Science at Marygrove College. She attended a biology workshop at Camp Sagawan, Illinois in 1954.

She was missioned to: St. Mary School, Monroe; St. Thomas, Ann Arbor; St. Patrick, Wyandotte; St. Mary, Mt. Morris. In 1929 she was appointed superior and principal at St. John, Jackson; also St. Catherine, Detroit; St. Vincent, Akron, Ohio; St. Patrick, Wyandotte. In 1945 she returned to teaching at St. Martin, Detroit; St. Rose, Detroit; Holy Cross, Marine City; St. Catherine, Detroit; St. Charles, Coldwater, St. Mary, Mt. Morris;

St. Cecilia, Detroit. From 1968-71 she worked with the elderly at Kundig Center, Detroit. In 1971 she retired to the Motherhouse.

The one thing that stands out as characteristic of Sister Mary Michael is that she was "truly a great community woman". In her autobiographical sketch she wrote that her special interests and hobbies were: "the common life and the I.H.M. community". She was most gracious to everyone she met, always vivacious and interested in others. She was generous with her time and would go out of her way to make a visiting missionary feel welcome and "at home". It would be difficult to find anyone who did not love her. When she became a patient on the third floor of the Infirmary she sensed the love and sympathy of those caring for her. On her last day she pleaded with Sister Remigia, who was attending her at the time, to stay with her. She died, ready to meet her God, on January 13, 1975.

Written by - Sister Francis Bernard Mehen