

## Sister Edna Stubna, CSA

Sister Edna (Helen) Stubna, 92, died on Saturday, November 1, 2008, at St. Francis Home where she resided.

Helen was born on February 15, 1916, in Scrubgrass Hollow, PA, the sixth of eleven children born to Maria and Ferdinand Stubna. Initially frail, Helen writes in an early autobiography that she “was not expected to live. Not only did I live, I was quite lively, getting into mischief periodically with my two brothers.” Her first four years of schooling were in a country school followed by four years in a Catholic school in Carnegie, reached by walking the three miles there and back. Graduating from eighth grade in 1931, Helen would not continue with high school until a few years later because other needs of the family came first during these depression years.



With the family dependent upon their farm for sustenance, Helen’s help was needed on the farm where she pitched in with the chores. Deciding to get a job to earn money, she spent two years doing housework for two dollars a week. It was after returning to the farm to help again with the chores that she decided to become a Sister, a decision supported by her family.

Helen entered the Congregation of Sisters of St. Agnes in 1935 and professed vows in 1938 as Sister Edna. For more than fifty years Sister ministered as an elementary school teacher in Illinois, Indiana, New York, and Wisconsin. Her own rural roots made her a natural with children in small cities and rural towns; her experience in larger schools led her to hone her teaching skills to overcome the children’s distractions by finding, she writes, “new ways to appeal to their interests and to make school a profitable experience for them.” She is remembered as a gentle woman who loved her ministry and went the extra mile to ensure that her students grew academically, spiritually, and socially. Her love of children was evident even in the early years of Sister’s diminishment as she would stand by the window and speak with excitement of the children, visible only to herself, playing in a grassy area.

Her radiant smile and gentle, fun-loving nature made Sister Edna a welcome addition to the communities of Sisters with whom she lived. Many remember her skill in gardening which she brought with her everywhere. She never lost that love of nature which remained with her from those early years on the family farm. In her last years at St. Francis Home, Sister suffered severe ill health and welcomed the care and companionship of her devoted blood sister, Sister Hilda.

Sister Edna is survived by two sisters: Sister Hilda Stubna, CSA, of Fond du Lac and Irene Pagliai of McDonald, PA; a sister-in-law, Betty Jane Stubna; and nieces, nephews, other relatives and the Sisters of St. Agnes with whom she lived, prayed, and ministered.

Preceding her in death are her parents, Maria and Ferdinand Stubna, her sisters Ida Clark, Mathilda Grandinetti, Mary Mondine, Theresa Michels, and brothers Steven, Ferdinand, David, and Michael.

**Visitation:** Stubna family members and the Congregation of St. Agnes will receive visitors on Wednesday, November 5, 2008, from 9:00 a.m. until 1:45 p.m. at Nazareth Court and Center, 375 Gillett Street, Fond du Lac. A prayer service will be held at 11:00 a.m.

**Services:** A Mass of Christian Burial will be celebrated at 2:00 p.m. on November 5, 2008, in the St. Francis Home Chapel, 33 Everett Street, Fond du Lac. Sister Edna's nephew, Father Kris Stubna of Pittsburgh, PA, will preside. Burial will follow at St. Joseph Springs Cemetery.

The Sisters of St. Agnes are grateful to the nurses and staff of St. Francis Home for their care of Sister Edna.