



## Sister Emilie Schmitt, O.S.B.

April 8, 1925 - July 22, 2024

CULLMAN—Sister Emilie Schmitt O.S.B., a Benedictine Sister of Sacred Heart Monastery in Cullman, AL, died peacefully at the monastery on July 22, 2024 at the age of 99 and in the 75th year of her religious profession. Sister Elisabeth Meadows, Prioress, led prayers as Sisters gathered at her bedside upon her passing.

Reception of the Body with Vespers for the Faithful Departed will be prayed on Thursday, July 25, at 4:45 PM in Sacred Heart Monastery Chapel in Cullman, followed by visitation until 7:00 PM. The Mass of Christian Burial will be held on Friday, July 26, at 10:30 AM. Interment in the monastery cemetery will follow.

Born in 1925 in Eufaula, AL, to Eugene Max and Mary Kramer Schmitt, Sister Emilie was baptized Mary Gene at Holy Redeemer Church in Eufaula. As a young child, Mary Gene moved with her family to Gulfport, MS, where she attended St. John the Evangelist School in Gulfport for both elementary and high school. Following graduation, she worked in her family's grocery business before entering the Benedictine community in Cullman.

The Sisters of Mercy who taught Sister Emilie at St. John's hoped that she would enter their congregation, but Mary Gene followed the example of three aunts who were Benedictine Sisters and she entered Sacred Heart Convent as a postulant in 1947. The following year she became a Novice and received the name Mary Emilie. Sister Emilie made her First Profession in 1949 and Perpetual Profession in 1952.

Sister Emilie already had strong family ties to Cullman and to the Benedictine Sisters. Her grandfather, Maximillian Schmitt, was an early settler in Cullman and his brickyard was the source of many of the bricks used in the construction of the monastery's first building, Otilia Hall. Sister Emilie also had many relatives in the town, including her aunts at Sacred Heart. Her family from Gulfport visited Cullman often during Sister Emilie's younger years.

Sister Emilie attended Sacred Heart College, receiving an A.A. in elementary education, and St. Bernard College to receive her A.B. degree. She also attended Cardinal Stritch College in Milwaukee for further study.

Sister's teaching ministry took her throughout the diocese, from Elberta in the south to Florence in the north. Hundreds of young students benefitted from her caring instruction over forty-one years of teaching. For many, she held the important role of first-grade teacher and was fondly remembered by former students who encountered her at the monastery or in her occasional visits to former schools or parishes.

Three teaching assignments held a particular warm place in Sr. Emilie's heart - St. Paul's and St. Margaret's schools in Birmingham, and St. Joseph Regional School in Florence. At St. Margaret's she also served as Principal and House Superior, and at St. Paul's she was able to teach alongside one of her aunts, Sister Clare Kramer.

In Florence, Sister Emilie taught 1st grade for twenty years, endearing herself not only to a generation of students who still remember her with great affection, but also to the entire parish communities of St. Joseph's in Florence and St. Michael's in St. Florian. When Sister Emilie was called to return to Cullman for ministry, the St. Joseph School Foundation's Board of Directors honored her with a special Resolution, noting her "true dedication to the development of the potential of each student," her exemplary service, her immeasurable contributions to the growth and development of the school, and her deep devotion to Catholic education.

In many of her mission assignments, Sister Emilie also served as sacristan,

work that she began as a young student assisting the Sisters of Mercy at St. John's school in Gulfport. When she retired from teaching, Sister Emilie took on the role of sacristan at the monastery. She served in this role for many years while also serving in the Retreat Center and ministering in other ways within the community. Sister Emilie found great joy in crocheting baby blankets that she offered to the community to give as gifts. Her creation of "slippers" made from recycled Christmas cards was an annual tradition that brought joy to many children.

Sister Emilie was noted for her kindness, her dedication to her responsibilities, her ready smile, and her loving heart. She was also known for her fidelity to prayer and could always be counted on to hold in prayer the prayer requests of others.

Letter writing was a special pleasure, especially the regular exchange of letters she shared with her sisters, Dot and Betty Clare, with whom she was close. The affection of nieces and nephews brought her great joy.

Sister Emilie was preceded in death by her parents; a sister, Dorothy Jenner; a nephew, Michael Jenner; and great-nephew Scott Robertson. Survivors include her Benedictine Sisters; a sister, Elizabeth Clare Cucchiara; and beloved nephews and nieces.

In lieu of flowers, memorial contributions may be made to the Benedictine Sisters of Cullman, AL, 916 Convent Rd., NE, Cullman, AL, 35055, or [shmon.org/support-us](http://shmon.org/support-us).

# Cemetery Details

## Sacred Heart Monastery Cemetery

Cullman, AL

# Previous Events

## Vespers and Visitation

JUL **25.** 5:00 PM - 7:00 PM (CT)

Sacred Heart Monastery  
916 Convent Road NE  
Cullman, AL 35055

## Funeral Mass

JUL **26.** 10:30 AM (CT)

Sacred Heart Monastery  
916 Convent Road NE  
Cullman, AL 35055