



School Sisters of Notre Dame
Atlantic-Midwest Province

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Sister Mary Constance Baker, SSND
January 15, 1943 – December 29, 2018



BALTIMORE - Sister Mary Constance Baker died peacefully at Villa Assumpta's Maria Health Care Center on Friday, Dec. 29, 2018. She was a vowed member of the School Sisters of Notre Dame for 56 years.

On Friday, Jan. 15, 1943, Helen Elizabeth Baker made her entry into the world. Born in Baltimore, she was the first child of Robert Patrick and Helen Louise Heubeck Baker. She was baptized at St. William of York Church, Baltimore. Libby, as she came to be known, was later joined by two brothers and three sisters. Her early childhood was peaceful and happy. Libby's education began in the fall of 1949 at St. Mark School, Catonsville, Md. where she was taught by the School Sisters of Notre Dame. It was there in her parish church, St. Mark that she received her first Holy Communion in 1950 and was confirmed in 1955.

Libby's early school years passed quickly. She described them as happy times of playing softball and basketball and reading a lot. After graduation from St. Mark, she began high school at Notre Dame of Maryland where she participated actively. She was in the school play and was the photography manager of the yearbook. Conversation with friends on a school trip to New York sparked serious reflection about what she would do after high school. Libby said in her autobiography, "I sometimes thought religious life was for me, but had put it out of my mind." In January of her senior year, she told her parents of her decision to enter the convent. Libby graduated from Notre Dame Preparatory School, Hampton Lane in June, 1961.

September 8, 1961 marked Libby's entrance into the School Sisters of Notre Dame. She was received into the novitiate on July 14, 1962 and was named Sister Mary Constance in honor of a beloved aunt. Sister Constance professed her first vows on July 27, 1963. Sister Constance's ministry began at St. Mary's School, Govans, Baltimore where she taught third, fifth and seventh grades (1964-68). In a move to Philadelphia, she taught

junior high at St. Peter's School (1971-72), then went to St. Vincent's Orphanage, Tacony, Philadelphia where she was prefect and social worker (1972-81). While spending a year as guidance counselor at St. Maria Goretti High School, Hagerstown, Md. (1981-82), Connie continued to serve at St. Vincent's as the director of Group Living. During 15 years at St. Maria Goretti, Connie was teacher, assistant principal and campus minister (1982-97). She taught at Delone Catholic High School, McSherrystown, Penn. (1997-2000), then ministered at St. Charles Borromeo parish, Pikesville, Maryland under a variety of titles, finally becoming pastoral life director (2000-08). Connie volunteered at Sisters Academy and Caroline Center, Baltimore (2008-15). She came to Maria Health Care Center at Villa Assumpta in Jan., 2015 for prayer and presence.

Sister Mary Constance earned a Bachelor of Arts degree in Education from the College of Notre Dame of Maryland (now University) in 1968 and a Master of Arts in Education with a major in Counseling and Guidance from Villanova University in 1974.

Connie was a great friend. Her demeanor was inviting. She always had time for you as evidenced by her many good friends. Her wit and sense of humor, intelligence and keen insight combined with a gentle and genuine kindness were always welcoming. Connie was an avid reader and game player. She loved photography and often had a camera in her hand while traveling. Though not gifted with a singing voice, Connie was a devoted listener of classical music. At Maria Health Care Center, she had bridge buddies, organized movie nights and cheered on the Thursday night bowlers.

Sister Constance lived a wonderfully full life. She answered her call through devotion to service and in diverse ministries as teacher, house mother, social worker, parish pastoral director and volunteer. She heard God's voice and sought God's presence. Seeking God became the pursuit of her life and it was her passion to open the hearts of others to that experience. Now she stands witness to the presence of God.

A Christian Wake Service was held for Sister Constance on Jan. 10, 2019. The Liturgy of Christian Burial was celebrated on Jan. 11, 2019. Rev. Ray Chase, pastor of St. Vincent de Paul Church, Baltimore was the principal celebrant. Concelebrating were Mgr. Lloyd Aiken, pastor of Sacred Heart Church, Glyndon, Maryland and St. Charles Borromeo Church, Pikesville and Rev. Michael Roach, pastor of St. Bartholomew Church, Manchester, MD. They were assisted by Christopher Welsh, pastoral associate at St. Charles Borromeo. A selection of reflective instrumental music was presented by dear friend, Mary Louise Chesley-Cora. Both services were held in the chapel of Villa Assumpta. Interment followed at Villa Maria Cemetery, Glen Arm Rd., Glen Arm, MD.

Sister Mary Constance is survived by two brothers, Robert P. Baker and Henry Baker and two sisters, Mary Johnson and Cathy Swartz.

