

*Sister M. Leona Backus*  
*May 2, 1912 - January 19, 1982*



*Secular Name:* Catherine Philomena  
*Entrance:* September 13, 1927  
*Place of Birth:* Hazelton PA/Detroit MI  
*Parents:* Adam and Constance  
*Siblings:* Stella and step brothers: Frank, John, Albert, Edward, and Anthony DeGutis.  
*Elementary School:* St. George, Detroit MI  
*High School:* St. Francis Prep  
*Higher Education:* Duquesne University, University of Pittsburgh  
*Degrees:* B.A. Ed., M.A. Literature

*Ministry:*

After her widowed mother remarried, the family moved to Detroit, Michigan, where she attended St. George School. As a postulant, she was sent to teach at St. George School in Philadelphia.

Sister Leona served twelve years as Local Superior. She also served twelve years as combination General Councilor and General Secretary. She was Retirement Director beginning in 1977 and Chairperson of On-Going Formation the last two years of her life.

Sister was the liaison person between the community and the Auxiliary in Chicago for a period of ten years. Under the guidance of Sister Gertrude, Sister Leona's secretarial outreach included efforts to promote the beatification of Venerable John Neumann.

During the period of Vatican II, Sister Leona was instrumental in leading Chapter Discussion regarding Guidelines for Self-Study, Opinionaires, Proposals for Chapter, etc. The publication of the 1972 Interim Constitutions was collated and prepared for publication by Sister Leona. She was also responsible for the writing of the 1968 Constitution. In the ensuing years, Sister was Chairperson of the Constitution Committee

*"Eternal joy and laughter be yours."*