

Sister Miriam Racas, OSF

April 6, 1925 – May 16, 2022



Secular Name: Nellie, Angela Mary Racas
Birth: April 6, 1925
Parents: Anthony and Agatha
Siblings: Joanne, Anne, Stanley, Joseph
Entrance: September 13, 1941
Elementary School: St. George, Detroit
Higher Education: Duquesne Univ. BA Edu.; MA Edu. Supervision

Ministry:

In her autobiography Sister Miriam wrote: “Mother David was principal (at St. George School in Detroit). Before she left for another assignment she made sure I would become a Sister of St. Francis. She had me skip the 8th grade and go to our Academy. I entered my senior year as was customary.” And so began Angela’s life in Pittsburgh as a Franciscan, where she received the name Miriam as a novice.

Sister Miriam taught grades 3 to high school for 24 years and served as principal for 27 years. She began several new ministries to work with the poor. In the summers she volunteered as counselor, cook and tutor for troubled boys at Adelphoi House in Latrobe and later as a counselor at a camp with twelve blind teenage girls. It seems Sister Miriam just couldn’t sit still for a minute when there was a need.

In 1982 Sister Miriam spent a year at Covenant House in New York City assisting street youth. In 1992 she became a Residential Counselor at Boys Hope. She only stayed there for two months due to illness. In 1993 she was invited to be part of the Neumann Inter-congregational mission in Gallup NM where she served as principal at the school for three years.

In 1996 the community opened their doors to the Franciscan Spirit & Life Center. Sister Miriam began yet another ministry as the Dietary Manager until 2002, serving retreatants wonderful home-cooked meals. Her and Sister Augusta also volunteered twice a week at the Food Bank for two years. After retiring from the retreat center, Sister Miriam offered to serve in our Lithuanian mission where she taught catechetics to mentally challenged adults. This was a ministry close to her heart as she was able to visit her Lithuanian roots. Suffering from arthritis for years, the bitter cold was a challenge for her. Sister Miriam returned to the Motherhouse and assisted in the Finance office until 2004. She then became the Receptionist Coordinator until 2015 when the Motherhouse closed.

Sister Miriam lived in community at Nativity from 2015-2016. She then felt it was time for some assistance and she asked to move to Presbyterian Senior Care in Oakmont. It was during this time that she truly lived her Ministry of Prayer and Presence to the residents and the staff. Many staff persons shared that Sister Miriam’s ability to listen was her great gift to them, even until her final days.

*One thing I ask, one thing I seek; to live in the house of my God
all the days of my life. ~Psalm 27*

