

Sister Clare Bloms, CSJ
September 17, 1923 ~ October 10, 2016

(in Clare's words)

I was born in our family house in St. Michael, Minnesota September 17, 1923 and christened Anita Marie. My parents were Clara (Zachman) and Bernard Bloms. My four older brothers were Kenneth (Romuald, OSB), Norman (John, OSB), Allen (Burton, OSB), and Lewis. My younger brother was Roger.

We attended St. Michael's Grade School. My father died when I was seven, so when I was ready for high school my mother took me to St. Paul to consult with her brother, Monsignor Zachman. To enable me to attend St. Joseph's Academy, he invited me to live at St. Francis de Sales rectory and to help my aunt with the housekeeping. With that agreed upon, we continued on our way to the Academy. There we were greeted by Sister Henrica, and Sister and my mother were soon happily conversing in German.

Near the end of my senior year, I told Sister Mary Aloysius that I wanted to become a Sister of St. Joseph of Carondelet. My brother, Father Romuald OSB, had other ideas. Sister asked him to please come to see her. She won him over and I entered on September 12, 1941. On March 19, 1942 I became Sister Bernard Clare, a name that gave my mother comfort and joy. Years later I dropped the name Bernard. I made first vows on March 19, 1944 and final vows on August 15, 1947.

Our preparation for a life of teaching began in the Novitiate, continued at the Diocesan Teachers College, and culminated in our receiving a degree from the College of St. Catherine, mine being in Education and Sociology. I taught at St. James, Blessed Sacrament, and Cathedral in St. Paul, and at Ascension in Minneapolis.

In 1957 I volunteered for Japan, but after a year of preparation in our mission in Hawaii, word came from Japan that those over age 35 would not be accepted for Japan. I stayed on in Hawaii until 1970. While there I earned an M.Ed. in Administration and Supervision.

On my return to the mainland, I taught for a brief time at St. Columba's and then served as principal of the grade school in Marshall, Minnesota for 12 years and next as principal in St. Peter, Minnesota for seven years.

Sister Frieda asked me to be maintenance coordinator for the Randolph complex, but after a short time I asked to go into cosmetology, as I saw a need for these services at Bethany. Upon receiving my license from Vocational Tech, I became the beautician for Bethany and also worked in ceramics until my retirement in 1999.

I enjoyed creative ceramics, sewing, crocheting, knitting, crewelwork, and all manner of staging for school programs and yard work.

In 1976 I traveled to Sweden on an IGE Foundation-Exchange Teacher Program. I have also gone with my brothers, Father Romuald and Father Burton, to Alaska, New York, Mexico and Hawaii.

In the April 1994 issue of the Justice Office publication *Revelations*, Clare wrote: "My need to do something has become an educational, satisfying ministry for me. I came to volunteer at Learning in Style. It did not take long and I was 'hooked'. Working among individuals from many different countries along with a caring, cheerful faculty is a great joy. Presently I am the placement tester. One of LIS's goals is to place incoming students with the proper teacher, depending on the level indicated by a placement test.

I have tested over 150 incoming immigrant students. This can be a challenge and the cause of many hilarious situations. I recently tested a woman from Togo, and when she was finished she came around the desk, put her arms around me and said, 'Teacher Clare, you be my American mother?' Then, rubbing her obviously pregnant body, she continued, 'You be my Gloria's American grandmother?' How can you not respond to such a request!

Clare came to live at Bethany in 2008 and to Carondelet Village in 2011. She died peacefully at Carondelet Village October 10, 2016.

Clare was preceded in death by her parents, Bernard and Clare; her brothers, Kenneth (Romuald, OSB), Norman (John, OSB), Allen, (Burton, OSB), Lewis and Roger. She is survived by her sister-in-law, Verna (Roger); nieces and nephews Mary Hoffman (Ernie), Bobbi Dawson (Vern), Susie Sevcik (Al, deceased), Mark (Dorothy), Mike (Jeanne), and John (Christi); grandnieces and nephews and great grandnieces and nephews; Judy Madigan, CSJ, and the Madigan family; the Listad family; Sisters of St. Joseph, Consociates and care-givers at Bethany Convent and Carondelet Village, and "the people who have touched my life in ministry including teachers, staff and students".

Mass of Christian burial was celebrated October 14, 2016 at Our Lady of the Presentation Chapel. Burial was at Resurrection Cemetery.

May Clare rest in God's eternal loving peace.