

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: _____

CULLMAN—Sister Francine Hasenbein, O.S.B., died early Saturday morning in the infirmary at Sacred Heart Monastery, following a lengthy illness. She was attended by Sister Janet Marie Flemming, O.S.B., Prioress, Sister Bernadette Sachs, O.S.B., and other Sisters. She will be brought home on Monday afternoon at 4 p.m., August 29th; afterwards, members of Sister's family and friends will join the Community to celebrate Vespers of the Dead, followed by visitation until 7 p.m..

Rev. Marcus Voss, O.S.B., of St. Bernard Abbey, will celebrate the funeral liturgy and give the homily. Sister Madeline Contorno, O.S.B., will give a reflection following Communion. Sister Janet Marie will lead the interment service at Sacred Heart Monastery Cemetery.

Elizabeth Mary Hasenbein was the second daughter and eleventh of sixteen children born to Frank Anton and Elizabeth Mary Grabber Hasenbein of Cullman. She was baptized and confirmed at Sacred Heart Church and graduated from the parish elementary school

Following her graduation from Sacred Heart Academy, Elizabeth (Betty) worked for six years in several Civil Service positions: at the Analysis and Intelligence Service of the War Department in Washington, D.C., and in Cullman at the Tax Collector's Office and the Alabama State Employment Office.

Discerning a religious vocation, she entered Sacred Heart Monastery in 1948, received the Benedictine Habit and the name Sister Francine in 1949, made her Temporary Profession in 1950 and her Final Monastic Profession in 1953. Devoted to her patron St. Francis, she was notable in the Community for her careful observance of poverty. She lived a long and faithful life as a daughter of St. Benedict, celebrating her Silver Jubilee in 1975, her Golden Jubilee in 2000, and just last year in 2010 her 60th year of Monastic Profession.

Training for the ministry of teaching, she received an A.A. from Sacred Heart College and a B.A. from St. Bernard College. She taught at parish elementary schools in Birmingham, Tuscaloosa, Sheffield, and St. Florian and was principal and superior at St. Catherine's in Pratt City for five years.

After earning a Master's in Library Science from George Peabody College in Nashville, Sister became a librarian or assistant librarian for many years, serving at John Carroll High, Southern Benedictine College, St. Bernard Prep School, Sacred Heart Elementary School, Holy Family High School in Birmingham, and Sacred Heart Monastery Library. An especially happy assignment for her was the years she served first as Interim Director and then Assistant Director of the Cullman County Public Library. While there, she directed the popular "Lunch and Learn" library program for the public.

Active in Benedictine Community activities, Sister served as a member and occasional chair of the Peace and Justice Committee, chaired a Self-Study Committee, and was secretary of the first

Communications Committee. She was faithful in writing to Alabama's Congressmen and Senators about matters affecting the poor and immigrants.

She was also active in the Toolen Unit of the Catholic Library Association in Alabama, was occasionally an officer, presented a paper at one state meeting, and had an article published in the *Catholic Library World*.

Always interested in history, she worked on her family's genealogy for many years and produced an impressive document. She was also a longtime member and occasionally an officer of the Cullman Historical Society and was hired occasionally to help at the Cullman County Museum.

In her final years, she volunteered as a tutor for Hispanic children at Cullman Elementary School and worked faithfully at collecting paper at the monastery for re-cycling. She was featured in an article in *Southern Living* for these two activities.

Sister's passing is mourned by her Benedictine Sisters; her surviving brothers Mike, Jim, and Al; and a multitude of nephews, nieces, grandnephews and grandnieces, and cousins.