



# BENEDICTINE SISTERS

SACRED HEART MONASTERY  
in CULLMAN, ALABAMA

916 Convent Road NE, Cullman, AL 35055 ~ [www.shmon.org](http://www.shmon.org) ~ (256)734-4622

April 15, 2021

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE \_\_\_\_\_

CULLMAN—Sister Mary Vincent Beckman, O.S.B., a Benedictine Sister of Sacred Heart Monastery in Cullman, AL, died on Monday, April 13, 2021, at the age of 93. Sister Tonette Sperando, Prioress, and Sister Treva Heinberg, Sub-Prioress, were at her side, offering prayers of the dying. Final arrangements are pending. The funeral Mass will be private due to COVID-19 prevention measures. Limited attendance may be possible at the graveside.

Born in 1927 in Sheffield, AL, Sr. Mary Vincent was baptized Cecilia Catherine Beckman at St. Joseph Catholic Church in Sheffield. Her parents, Frederick Christian and Mary Weth Beckman, nurtured her within a devout Catholic family. Her early years of education were in Sheffield where she excelled in both academics and music under the tutelage of Benedictine Sisters. After completing eighth grade, Sister transferred to Sacred Heart Academy in Cullman, graduating in 1945.

During her high school years, Sister Mary Vincent felt a strong pull toward religious life, and followed in the footsteps of her eldest sister, Sr. Cornelia, when she entered the monastic community as a postulant during her final semester of high school. She entered the novitiate July 29, 1945, receiving the religious name Mary Vincent. Sister made her temporary monastic profession in 1946 and perpetual profession in 1949. During these years, Sr. Mary Vincent was continuing her education, first at Sacred Heart College and St. Bernard College in Cullman, and then at Mount St. Scholastica College in Atchison, KS, from which she graduated with a B.A. in Music Education. She later received a M.A. in this field from Duquesne University in Pennsylvania.

Sr. Mary Vincent's academic, administrative, and musical gifts were put to fruitful use during her sixty years as an educator, school administrator, piano instructor, and church organist. She taught in parish schools as far south as Pensacola, FL and as far north as Florence, AL. However it was her twenty years at St. Paul's School in Birmingham and twenty years at Sacred Heart School and Church in Cullman for which she is most remembered.

As a teacher, Sr. Mary Vincent was demanding of excellence, yet devoted and tender in her care for her students. Former pupils remember her with great fondness, and even in her oldest years she continued to receive visits from those she had taught.

When Sr. Mary Vincent first began piano lessons at age seven and violin lessons the next year, she likely did not envision that she was embarking on over eighty years as a musician. Shortly after beginning violin lessons she was playing in the school orchestra, was playing for parish liturgies when she was thirteen, and she was still playing organ at Sacred Heart Monastery well into her 80<sup>th</sup> year. In between, she studied music at Sacred Heart under the legendary Sr. Anastasia, played in student orchestras, taught private lessons to innumerable budding pianists, served as church organist at five different parishes, and served on committees to either purchase or renovate organs in three different churches, including the Cathedral of St. Paul in Birmingham.

Within the monastic community, Sister served at various times as organist, *schola* director, and as a member of the finance, liturgy, and election committees. During the community's recent renovation project, Sr. Mary Vincent was asked to play a key role in helping manage the disposition and care of monastery furnishings and goods during the course of the project. She filled this role, as she did all her roles – with great love, tireless devotion, a high standard of excellence, and tender care for her Sisters and their home. In addition to her monastic Sisters, Sr. Mary Vincent dearly loved her family, with whom she was close. In her later years, trips to South Dakota to visit her sister were treasured times for her.

Sr. Mary Vincent was preceded in death by her parents; by her sister, Sr. Cornelia (Regina) Beckman, O.S.B.; and by her brothers Paul Henry Clark and Arnold Francis Clark.

Survivors include her Benedictine Sisters; her sister, Margaret Mary Geise of Clark, SD; and numerous nieces and nephews.

In lieu of flowers, memorial contributions may be made to the Benedictine Sisters of Cullman, AL, 916 Convent Rd., Cullman, AL, 35055.

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