



## Sister M. Stephanie Helfrich

August 20, 1934 - April 30, 2023

Sister M. Stephanie Helfrich, OSU  
(Dorothy Frances Helfrich)

Sister M. Stephanie Helfrich, 88, died at Otterbein Sunset House on Sunday, April 30, 2023. Sister Stephanie, daughter of the late Stephen and Dorothy (Rowe) Helfrich, entered the Ursuline Convent from St. Agnes Parish, Toledo, Ohio, in August of 1955. She graduated from St. Ursula Academy in 1952 and Mary Manse College in 1963 where she earned a Bachelor's degree.

When reflecting in 2022 on her 70 years as an Ursuline Sister, Sister Stephanie said, "I would not give up one day of my life to be any younger because of all the wonderful experiences I've had, through all my different ministries. Each offered great opportunities with God's people."

Sister Stephanie taught at St. John the Baptist, Point Place, St. Joseph, Tiffin, and at both Our Lady of Perpetual Help and Rosary Cathedral, Toledo, where she also served as principal.

After teaching, Sister Stephanie participated in and was awarded a certificate from the St. Louis University School of Divinity Institute of Religious Formation program.

In 1972, Sister Stephanie was elected Councilor on the Ursuline Leadership Team and was later re-elected to the Council for several terms. Sister Stephanie was a member of the Community's Formation Team and saw this ministry as an opportunity to assist those seeking a religious vocation,

supporting their discernment by walking the journey with them. At this time she began her long-standing ministry of Spiritual Direction and Retreat work, which gave her the privilege of hearing one's life story using her gift of gentle listening. Over the course of nearly half a century, Sister Stephanie helped countless religious and lay persons deepen their walk with God.

Sister Stephanie served as Assistant Vicar and then Vicar for Religious for the Diocese of Toledo for six years. She also worked in the Business Office of the Ursuline Convent as a coordinator for health insurance and until recently, continued giving Spiritual Direction and conducting Retreats on a part-time basis.

Sister Stephanie served on the national board of the Religious Formation Conference and on the executive committee of the National Conference of Vicars for Religious. Within the Diocese of Toledo, Sister Stephanie served on the Admissions/Formation (Seminary) Board, the Liturgical Commission and the Women in Church - Priests' Council.

Sister Stephanie was preceded in death by her parents and brother James (Sharon) Helfrich. She is survived by her sister-in-law Sharon Helfrich, niece Karen (Grayson) Smith, nephews Stephen Helfrich, James (Dana) Helfrich, Timothy (Deborah, deceased) Helfrich and Jeffery (Cathy) Helfrich, her very close friend Sister Mary Alice Henkel, OSU, as well as her other Sisters and Associates of the Ursuline Community.

Visitation will be held on Monday, May 8, 2023, beginning at 9 a.m. at Ursuline Center, 4035 Indian Road, Toledo, Ohio, with a Funeral Mass beginning at 10:30 a.m. Interment will follow at Resurrection Cemetery.

Memorials may be made to the Ursuline Convent, 4045 Indian Road, Toledo, Ohio 43606. Please sign the guest register at [CoyleFuneralHome.com](http://CoyleFuneralHome.com).

Arrangements are by Coyle Funeral Home.

# Previous Events

## Visitation

MAY 8. 9:00 AM - 10:30 AM (ET)

Ursuline Center  
4035 Indian Road  
Toledo, OH 43606

## Funeral Ceremony

MAY 8. 10:30 AM (ET)

Ursuline Center  
4035 Indian Road  
Toledo, OH 43606

# Tribute Wall

SS

“ Stephanie was my spiritual director for many years. She was such a gift; kind, honest, challenging, supportive. The diocese and the Church have lost a light and woman of wisdom. I send my love and support to all who grieve her loss. May she continue to gift us as she intercedes for us before the Father.

Stacy Stang - May 05, 2023 at 03:45 PM

SK

“ Stephanie was a wonderful woman and mentor as I navigated my way through being a Vicar for Religious. We often met and she was a great listener and truly a woman of wisdom. Thank you to the Helfrich family and the Ursuline Sisters for sharing her with all us. Sympathy and prayers during this time of loss.

Sr. Mary Sue Kennedy - May 04, 2023 at 11:59 AM

SO

“ Stephanie was my dear friend for many years. We directed each other on directed retreats. She was such a good listener and really a very holy woman!  
Sr. Rosie, osu

Sr. Rosie Rau, osu - May 04, 2023 at 11:19 AM

SD

“ Stephanie will be missed as a friend and spiritual director to many of the Chatham Ursulines. Know you are in our thoughts and prayers.  
Sister Diane

Sister Diane - May 03, 2023 at 06:28 PM