

Our Sister Agnes Day, named Sarah Alice Mary Day, was born in Baguio, Philippine Islands on May 24, 1933, the third child of Kenneth and Alice Day. Due to her father's work, she spent most of her childhood in the Philippines, a country she loved very much. It was, however, when she was studying at Middlebury College in Vermont that she entered the Catholic Church on October 25, 1952. Almost immediately she became aware of a call to the religious life and, more specifically, to the Cistercian life, and after discovering Mt. St. Mary's Abbey in Wrentham, Massachusetts, she entered June 7, 1956.

Sister Agnes, as she was named in remembrance of her beloved sister Agnes who had died at 19, was a most fervent and responsible religious. She received the habit December 29, 1956, made temporary profession September 22, 1958 and made Solemn Vows December 8, 1961. She served many years as the Abbess' secretary, Vocation Director and finally Prioress, although it seems that her very favorite occupation was community cobbler. When Mother Angela died,

the continual example and influence of such purity of heart.

Her last years were no exception to this, although it was very painful for us to see her suffer in the way she did. As her body and mind failed she seemed in a very conscious way to share in the agony of Christ. We are grateful that Jesus has taken her home to himself, but we will miss her more than words can say. Decades ago she wrote words that are now fulfilled in her:

*Lord, the years have wings!  
When I was young  
they hung  
as motionless as hawks.  
and then  
a few slipped by like owls  
in the night,  
but now they dart in flight  
like hummingbirds  
speed-blurred  
Lord, though the years had wings  
as swift as lightning,  
yet would my bright desire  
lead the race  
spurred to such speed by love  
on fire to see  
Your Face!*

Mother Agnes was elected to succeed her March 21, 1986, and she remained our Abbess for twenty two years until her retirement at seventy five.

It would be hard to describe how much Mother Agnes meant to our community or how good she was. Her gentleness, intelligence, self-effacing service and, most of all, her absolute belief in her abbatial motto, "Love never fails," were the precious elements that moved us into a new stage of our existence as a community: a stage in which we became more conscious of our need to integrate both unity and diversity. If there was one word that was used more frequently and spontaneously than others to describe what we found in her, it was integrity, an integrity that seems to have been the secret force of her abbatial ministry. Mother Agnes was simply incapable of being anyone but herself, and the happy result was that we all felt invited to be the same. All the exterior accomplishments, and there were many, most particularly the foundation, and several years later the re-foundation, of Our Lady of the Angels Monastery in Crozet, Virginia, were secondary to the interior gift that she gave us,



**Mother Agnes Day ocso  
May 24, 1933-May 28, 2017**