

Sister Maristelle Schmitz, 84

Dec. 2, 1918 - Oct. 4, 2003

COLORADO SPRINGS, CO – Sister Maristelle Schmitz, the second daughter of Peter and Catherine Windeshausen Schmitz, was born Mary Ann Schmitz, Dec. 2, 1918, east of Panama. She attended St. Mary's Catholic School in Panama, graduating in 1937.

June 21, 1937, she joined the Benedictine Sisters of Mount St. Scholastica Convent in Atchison, KS. After her religious formation and promise of vows, Mary received the name Sister Maristelle. Sister attended Mount St. Scholastica College and received a B.A. degree in English in 1950. She taught at parochial schools in St. Joseph, MO; Atkinson, NE and Creston. During the summers, she attended Creighton University in Omaha, NE, and received a Master's in English in 1954. When the Benedictine Sisters of Mount St. Scholastica established a daughter house, Benet Hill Monastery, at Colorado Springs, CO in 1963, Sister Maristelle volunteered and became a charter member. After receiving her master's, she was assigned to serve at San Luis Valley in Colorado. For approximately 30 years she taught and counseled Spanish-American students in the public schools in San Luis Valley. Additional training came by way of national grants when she received a National Defense Education Grant for guidance to Louisiana State University and a Wall Street Journal Grant for journalism to Marquette University in Wisconsin. The Benet Hill community also sent her to Brawley, CA, to learn sign language. During the last 20 years, Sister Maristelle served as monastic archivist and librarian for the Benet Hill community and as librarian for National American University and CIVA Charter High School. She died Oct. 4, 2003, at age 84 at Benet Hill Monastery.

She was preceded in death by her parents, Peter and Catherine Schmitz; six brothers, Joseph Schmitz, Nicholas Schmitz, Msgr. Peter Schmitz, William Schmitz, Vincent Schmitz, John Schmitz, and two sisters, Louise Pauley and Catherine Croghan. She is survived by one sister, Margaret Croghan of Manning; nieces, nephews and other relatives and the sisters of her community.

A vigil was held at Our Lady of Peace Chapel, Benet Hill Monastery Oct. 17, 2003. A Eucharistic Liturgy of Christian Burial was held at Our Lady of Peace Chapel, Benet Hill Monastery in Colorado Springs, CO, Oct. 18, 2003. She gave her body to science. A memorial Mass was held at St. Mary's Church in Panama Nov. 9, 2003.

