



Name: Sister Mary Zigo (Sister Medard)

Date of Birth: October 11, 1916

Place of Birth: Pittsburg, Pennsylvania

Parents: Stephen and Katherine (Kucey) Zigo

Religious Profession: August 15, 1935

Date of Death: November 23, 2022

Age: 106

Years Professed: 87

Mary's parents, Stephen and Katherine (Kucey) Zigo, immigrated to America about 1912 from Czechoslovakia. Mary was born on October 11, 1916, a feast of the Blessed Mother, so she was named Mary. She was baptized at St. Mathew's Church in Pittsburg, Pennsylvania on October 15, 1916. Mary was confirmed on June 14, 1944 by the Rev. Paul Rhode.

When Mary was two years old, her mother and baby brother died during the flu epidemic. Her grandparents took care of the three children until their father, Stephen, remarried. His new wife, Anna (Soter) was a widow with four children. Sister Mary said "Our family grew from 3 siblings to seven.. and later to a family of 10 children". Sister Mary is the last of the ten children to die.

In the 1920's the family moved to a farm outside Zanesville, Ohio. Having grown up on a farm, she loved to plant and care for flowers, watch birds at their feeders. Her special enjoyment was watching and collecting multiple images of the cardinals.

Mary attended Valley School, a one-room school, for her elementary education. After completing 8<sup>th</sup> grade, she worked for a Catholic Family with 8 children living in Zanesville. Mary went with the children to ball games at St. Nicholas school. It was there that Mary first met the Franciscan Sisters of Christian Charity.

Mary wrote to Mother Inez

*"I have been thinking that I would like to be a postulant at your convent. I went to see Father Bender at St. Nicolas Church and he advised me to write to you and also to see Sister Raymond. I am working at the Good Samaritan Hospital at the present time. I have gone through the 8<sup>th</sup> grade and I am in good health. Mother Inez please send me all the information necessary to know before entering. I am*

*Sincerely yours,*

*Mary Zigo*

On August 6, 1932, Sister Edna wrote the following to Mother Inez, this is an excerpt of the letter

*"A sixteen year old Slavish girl, Mary Zigo, was sent over by Father Bender yesterday to interview me about going to the convent. She impressed me very well. She seems to be an innocent, retiring kind of*

*girl. She has finished 8<sup>th</sup> grade and likes to study but due to circumstances had to leave school and go to work. During the past year she has been doing housework but sent all her money home which was only \$3 a week. She wrote to a community in New York which she saw advertised in Sunday Visitor but Father Bender told her to see us first. Do you wish to give her a trial, Mother? She hasn't any means but a healthy body and willingness to work she says. Shall I send her to the Convent or keep her with us for a time? I think for her it would be better to go now and be ready for school. We would have to make her a habit in order that she might use a permit. In case you accept her Mother, could Sister Petronella send her a veil collar and cape?.... God bless you ever. Your devoted Sister Edna.*

Mary entered Holy Family Convent on August 16, 1932. She graduated from Holy Family Academy in 1936. She was received as a novice on June 14, 1933 and was given the name Sister Medard. She returned to her baptismal name Mary in the 1960's. On August 15, 1935 she professed her first vows and celebrated her final profession on August 15, 1938.

Sister Mary attended Holy Family College from 1937- 1955. In 1959 she graduated from St. Norbert College Cum Laude with the Bachelor of Science degree in Education and a minor in History. Sister also earned credits at Milwaukee State Teachers College, the College of Steubenville and John Carroll University.

In her 66 years of teaching Sister Mary taught all the elementary grades, was a principal, and did library work and remedial work. Sister's teaching ministry was served in Wisconsin, West Virginia and Ohio. Sister Mary retired from teaching in 2002.

Sister Mary served in numerous ways at the Motherhouse for 8 years and entered the St. Rita Health Center in 2010 where she said she was treated like a queen. Sister Mary enjoyed embroidery, sewing, cooking, reading, playing cards, scrabble and other games. In 2021 Sister Mary was recognized on the Today show for her 105<sup>th</sup> birthday.

Sister Mary found her strength from a deep prayer life and an intimate relationship with the Lord. She was a joy to whomever she met.

In Sister Mary's words

"After living my religious life for 75 years, I have become more aware as the years close in on me of the importance of each moment of my life. The challenge to live each moment in union with and communion with my Lord is of utmost importance. In the end that will be my reward. Praise God for these wonderful years.

Sister Mary you have earned your reward of eternal life. We praise and thank God for the wonderful years you have spent with us.