

Sister Renata Liegey, 94, died October 28, 2026, at St. Scholastica Monastery in her 64th year of consecrated life, after a life of creative service to God and God's people. She became a novice in 1962 and received the name Renata which means 'reborn,' appropriate for a young woman embracing the ancient Rule of St. Benedict. She made her First Monastic Profession in 1963 and her Perpetual Profession in 1966. In 2013 she celebrated her Golden Jubilee and in 2023 her Diamond Jubilee.

She was born Margaret Liegey on August 9, 1932 in Karthaus, Pennsylvania to Hilary Clement and Gladys Gertrude (Schultz) Liegey, and raised in a devout family who prayed the rosary often. Developing an early passion for art, after high school she moved from her rural neighborhood to New York City to work and take classes. Advised that a warmer climate would be better for her health, she moved to Phoenix where she worked as an X-ray technologist while studying sculpture.

In time she was drawn to the Duluth Benedictines by their devotion to the Eucharist and the Divine Office, and so braved our notorious winters and entered the Community in 1961. At The College of St. Scholastica, she completed her BA in Art and then returned to Phoenix, where she lived with other Sisters on mission and taught art at Gerard High School until 1969.

For two years she and Sister Ambrose Marsnik worked adjacent to the Boundary Waters of Minnesota, where they established the now-closed House of Peace retreat center in Winton near Ely. In 1971 she returned to a warmer climate, to St. Gertrude's School in Washington, DC to teach arts and crafts to developmentally challenged girls for 18 life-giving years. She loved each of them and they loved her.

Then she moved to the Franciscan Center of Wholistic Living in Saint Paul (later called WomenWell), where she became a certified massage therapist and T'ai Chi Chih instructor. In 2010 she returned to the Monastery and served as Director of Hospitality while continuing to lead T'ai Chi Chih sessions. She explained that controlled movement connects us to creation where we experience the most important thing about God: God is love.

Sister Renata took delight in meeting characters from all walks of life and took joy in her wide range of friends. Looking back, she wrote, "The Light continues to call each of us, though our paths may be diverse and our understanding blurred. My constant prayer is that others may find peace and happiness on their own journey." When she moved to Benet Hall within the Monastery, her caretakers became her own family. She would tell them, "Do you know how wonderful you are? God made us in his image, so we are wonderful!"

In her years of working with clay, she began to see how God works our human clay until we turn and fall into God's arms. Through living the Holy Rule, as Sister Renata did throughout life, we become stones thrown into a pool of water. The ripples expand to carry the love of Christ out into a world desperate for love.

Sister Renata was preceded in death by her parents, her brother Joseph, and her sister Dolores Bonnard. She is survived by beloved nieces and nephews, many friends, and the Sisters of St. Scholastica Monastery. She loves us all and invites us to come together at the end in that place of light and deep peace.

https://duluthbenedictines.org/connect/blog/sister-renata-liegey-osb/