

In Loving Memory

Sister Mary Carla Okumura



Sister Mary Carla Okumura, 92, passed away at Hakuai Hospital, Kyoto, Japan, on April 4, 2024.

The oldest of five children, she was born to Harue (Yamate) and Yoshikazu Okumura on September 9, 1931, in Kure City in Hiroshima, Japan, and given the name Michiko. Three sisters and one brother followed to complete the family. She attended a Buddhist kindergarten, elementary and high school.

After World War II ended, she and a friend began to read the Bible and went to a nearby Protestant church to attend services. Not satisfied with the experience these services provided, they decided to visit and learn more about the Catholic church. After receiving instructions, Michiko was baptized on December 24, 1948, and received the baptismal name of Fabiola.

While employed as a clerk in a department store in Hiroshima, she began reading the correspondence of the poet Paul Claudel and realized that she must seek what God wanted of her. After much prayer, she discovered she was being called to dedicate herself to God completely.

Michiko entered the candidature on November 1, 1964, at Shishigatani in Kyoto. From 1964 until 1965, she served as a temporary office staff member at Notre Dame Jogakuin Junior and Senior High School in Kyoto. She was received into the novitiate on August 24, 1966, and given the name Mary Carla. She professed her first vows on August 25, 1967, and final vows on August 25, 1973.

From 1967 until 1980, she served as a member of the office staff at Notre Dame Jogakuin in Kyoto. From 1981, Sister Mary Carla was on the office staff of Notre Dame Gakuin Elementary School in Kyoto.

Beginning in 2001, she ministered as the treasurer of the elementary school, and also instructed the students in the Tea Ceremony Club. She was a Tea Ceremony teacher until 2015.

In 2016, Sister Mary Carla began serving as a community service staff member at Iwakura Convent. She also commuted to the elementary school, continuing her work as a Tea Ceremony instructor during that same time. Since 2020, she was in a ministry of prayer and presence.

continued

Birth
September 9, 1931

Baptism
December 24, 1948

Profession
August 25, 1967

Death
April 4, 2024

Burial
Kinugasa Cemetery,
Kyoto, Japan

*Precious and blessed is
the death of the faithful
before God... for
they die in union with
their dear Jesus, in the
grace of God, in peace.*

Blessed Theresa of Jesus Gerhardinger
Foundress of the School Sisters of Notre Dame
Letter 11, September 10, 1831

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*Sister Mary Carla
Okumura*

She was a School Sister of Notre Dame (SSND) for 57 years.

The funeral Mass for Sister Mary Carla was held on April 5, 2024, in the Iwakura Convent chapel with visitation and sharing of memories preceding the Liturgy. She was buried in Kinugasa Cemetery in Kyoto, Japan.

Sister Mary Carla was known for meeting people with great gentleness. May she rest in peace.

By Sister Maria Dominica Sento, SSND

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