



## Sr. Gemma Atanasio

February 27, 1916 - April 20, 2013

Sr. Gemma Atanasio, a Sister of Our Lady of Charity, died peacefully at the convent in Carrollton OH on Saturday, April 20, 2013 at the age of 97. Sister Gemma was born February 27, 1916 in Ozone Park, New York. She was one of four children born to Anthony and Carmela Atanasio. Sister attended schools in Ridgewood NY where Braille and typing were offered, as she was born sightless. She graduated from Brooklyn College with a BA majoring in Romance Languages. Sister was employed as a transcriptionist by the Dictaphone Corporation and secretary to the Vice-President for 11 years prior to entering the convent. She was the first handicapped person hired by Dictaphone. She was proud that her work performance opened the door for other visually challenged persons to be employed prior to the American Disabilities Act. She traveled the subways to work with her seeing eye dog, Queenie. During 1939 and 1940 she worked the World's Fair advocating the need for training availability for the handicapped and demonstrating her capabilities. Sister entered the convent in Wheeling, WV in 1952 and was a generous and faithful member for over 51 years. There she continued her secretarial/receptionist work for many years in the community. She also taught Braille to students from the nearby Catholic high schools. In 1968 Sister Gemma ministered for four years at Maurawood, a maternity home for unwed mothers, in West Palm Beach FL as receptionist and secretary. During this time she completed her certification in medical transcription. She then worked at the Catholic Service Bureau in West Palm Beach, traveling daily from

Delray Beach to West Palm by bus. Sister returned to Wheeling and her secretarial work in 1980. She was a member of the Legion of Mary and of the St. Michael's Parish adult and funeral choirs. As her health failed she came to the convent in Carrollton where she continued to support others, especially through prayer ministry. Sister was preceded in death by her parents, her brother Joseph, her sisters Mary Fucito and Sr. Anthony Atanasio OLC. Sister is survived by the Sisters of Our Lady of Charity; her niece, Sr. Eileen Fucito C.P. of Memphis TN, and nephew Ralph Fucito of Raleigh NC and several great nieces and nephews. Visitation will be at the Carrollton convent Tuesday, April 23 from 4-7pm. Mass of Christian Burial will be held in Carrollton at 10:30am, Wednesday, April 24 with burial following in the Immaculate Heart Cemetery. In lieu of flowers, donations may be made to the Sisters of Our Lady of Charity Education Fund, PO Box 340, Carrollton, OH 44615

# Tribute Wall

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“ *My thoughts are with the family and friends of Gemma. In Isaiah 25:8 God is swallowing up death forever and will wipe out tears from all faces.*

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**Barb Layton** - January 29, 2015 at 01:07 PM