



Sister Agnes (Mary) Cunningham

May 26, 1923 - January 22, 2025

Sister Agnes (Mary) Cunningham was born Middlesbrough Country N. Ormesby, Yorkshire, England to Michael and Monica (Burns) Cunningham on May 26, 1923. Raised in Chicago, she was a parishioner of Visitation and St. Gall parishes in her youth. She entered the congregation of the Servants of the Holy Heart of Mary in 1940 and professed vows on January 25, 1943.

Sister ministered in education, teaching elementary school through post-graduate students. She was a professor of church history and patristics at Mundelein Seminary, St. Mary of the Lake, from 1967 to 1991, where she helped to educate and form a generation of lay men, priests and bishops. In addition, she served as a freelance writer, theological consultant and translator for her religious community. She was the first female president of the Catholic Theological Society of America.

Sister Agnes was a great storyteller and a devoted friend and mentor to many. Her mission statement stated: I, Sister Agnes, a believer, know that everything I am comes from the love of God and His grace flows back -points-to Him". On her 80 th jubilee she mused, "I wish that everybody knew that as we are passing through times of darkness, challenge and doubt ..., God still gives us strength and love to support others".

Sister Agnes answered the call to eternal life on January 22, 2025 in Clifton, Illinois at the age of 101. She was preceded in death by her parents, her sister and brother-in law, Helen and Harry J. O'Kane, nephew Philip O'Kane and niece Cathy Lyon. She is survived by niece Nancy (James) Misch; nephews, Michael, and James (Sheila) O'Kane, and their dearly loved families.

She will be missed by her birth family, her religious family, the Servants of the Holy Heart of Mary, scores of friends and colleagues, and the residents and staff of La Bella of Clifton. Sister Agnes requested that you thank God for the gift of her life, remember that she loved you, and, please, pray for her.

Visitation will be on Thursday, February 6, 2025 from 2:00 p.m. until the time of the 6:00 p.m. prayer service at Clancy-Gernon-Hertz Funeral Home, Kankakee. Additional visitation will be on Friday, February 7, 2025 from 9:00 a.m. until the 11:00 a.m. funeral Mass at St. Mary's Catholic Church, Beaverville. Burial will follow at St. Mary's Catholic Cemetery, Beaverville. Memorials may be made to Servants of the Holy Heart of Mary or University of St. Mary of the Lake, Mundelein, Illinois.

Cemetery Details

St. Mary's Cemetery

Beaverville, IL 60912
(815) 435-2006

Previous Events

Visitation

FEB 6. 2:00 PM - 6:00 PM (CT)

Kankakee - Clancy-Gernon-Hertz Funeral Home
1480 W. Court St.
Kankakee, IL 60901
(815) 932-1214
cgfuneral@gmail.com

Visitation

FEB 7. 9:00 AM - 11:00 AM (CT)

St. Mary's Catholic Church in Beaverville
308 St. Charles St.
Beaverville, IL 60912

Funeral Mass

FEB 7. 11:00 AM (CT)

St. Mary's Catholic Church in Beaverville
308 St. Charles St.
Beaverville, IL 60912

Tribute Wall

FO

“ I met Sr. Agnes when she was a faculty teacher and taught Patrology. She was a brilliant teacher, and she had a great rapport with her students one referred to her as: "Agnes of Cunningham" and the seminarians who heard this remark were laughing at his remark. We always respected Sr. Agnes. She was a great teacher and well respected by her students. She will be missed by those seminarians and the faculty members as well. Eternal rest grant unto her soul O Lord and let the perpetual light shine upon her. May her soul and all the souls of the faithful departed, through the mercy of God. Rest in peace. Amen. Fr. Edward Ohm



Fr. Edward Ohm - February 03, 2025 at 02:13 PM

WG

“ I consider myself a fortunate man to have been a student of Sr. Agnes Cunningham at Mundelein Seminary. She directed my License thesis and was on the board of examiners for the License review. I wrote her a note on her feast day last week. May she be with Christ and in the every presence of her patronal namesake. Wilton Cardinal Gregory

Wilton Cardinal GREGORY - February 01, 2025 at 12:18 PM

MV

“ I did not know Sister Agnes, yet reading her obituary touched my soul. I am signing in to honor her life, work, and soul. Michael Vitoux

Michaell Vitoux - January 31, 2025 at 12:00 PM

KP

“ I was so fortunate to get to know sister agnes I loved being her nurse and being her friend I enjoyed our visits when I came to Illinois and I miss how I would try to come in and watch wheel of fortune with her when I worked with her, great memories she was a great person and will be missed! She touched so many life's.



Kristie Panozzo - January 28, 2025 at 07:14 PM

LM

“ I will truly miss taking care of and visiting with Sister Agnes. She was always full of concern and caring of others. No matter what my day was like it was always better after speaking to Sister Agnes. She was a true inspiration.



Laurie Meier - January 28, 2025 at 04:24 PM

CW

“ Christopher Wilcox lit a candle in memory of Sister Agnes (Mary) Cunningham



Christopher Wilcox - January 28, 2025 at 01:43 PM