

Margaret Burke died in the Bernard Mitchell Hospital of the University of Chicago on October 4, 1990, just as the Thursday afternoon mass in the Dougherty Community at Barat College was ending.

She was born in Morris, Minnesota, on June 17, 1913; her father was Charles S. Burke and her mother, Marietta Weston. Mimi, as she was called, was the eldest of three girls close in age. Jean Kurth now lives in Wichita; Eileen Quinlan died several years ago. When Mimi was five, their mother died, and Grandmother Burke came to stay a while with the family in Omaha. When her husband died soon after, she remained with her son and granddaughters. Mr. Burke was an attorney. A lover of golf, he would often play in the morning before work, taking along Mimi, who became an avid golfer.

Mimi attended Duchesne Academy and then Duchesne College, graduating in 1935 with a double major in English and philosophy. Entering the Society of the Sacred Heart the same year, she made her first vows on January 1, 1937. Ursula Benziger was then Mistress of Novices. For several years Mimi taught high school classes at the Convent of the Sacred Heart in Lake Forest and began graduate study at Loyola University, receiving the degree of Master of Arts in Philosophy in 1942. Like other RSCJ during World War II, Margaret Burke made her probation at Kenwood under Agnes Barry, and her profession on August 2, 1942. She then joined the faculty of Barat College, where she taught for twelve years, also studying at Loyola for her doctorate in clinical psychology, awarded in 1952.

In 1954 Mimi was appointed president of Barat College, a position she held for twenty-two years. During her tenure the college experienced its largest era of growth and development. Enrollment more than doubled, and six buildings were constructed. The demands of work did not preempt close contact with students, who appreciated her friendly manner and abiding interest, which continued through the years. She had indeed a remembering heart.

During and after her years at Barat, Mimi gave generously of her time and talents through service on such boards and committees as: American Bishops Committee on Ecumenism, Chicago Archdiocesan Committee on Ecumenism and Human Rights, Chicago Medical School, Chicago Ballet Theater, Lake Forest City Music Association, and Lake Forest Historical Society.

Although leaving Barat College was a costly sacrifice, she searched for a fulfilling ministry. For a time she volunteered at the Cradle (adoption agency) in Evanston, Illinois. Later on she served as a staff person at the Society's provincial house in St. Louis, and subsequently worked in the alumnae office at the Academy of the Sacred Heart in New Orleans. For several years she was visiting professor in Loyola University's Rome program and lived with the Religious of the Cenacle.

Her most recent work was counseling women prisoners in Dwight, Illinois, and at Cook County Jail in Chicago, and homeless women at Maria Shelter, a ministry Mimi dearly loved. During 1989-90, while engaged in this

counseling, she resided on the south side of Chicago with a group of RSCJ studying at the Catholic Theological Union and the University of Chicago. Because of a change in numbers, she and others prepared to move into another apartment in the summer of 1990. Mimi was eager for this move, unaware of what lay ahead.

For many years she had enjoyed good health. In late July, however, symptoms of a serious illness appeared requiring tests and, in August, hospitalization and eventual surgery for cancer on September 8. During these weeks, she received cards, calls, and visits from many, including President Lucy Morros of Barat College, Matt Gamber, S.J., whom she had known at Loyola in Rome and who is now a Jesuit scholastic, and alumnae and RSCJ. Her faithful community, Mary Hotz, Marie O'Ryan and Catherina Kim, spent much time with her and kept in touch with her family, the provincial house, the area communities, and Barat.

As the illness progressed, she was unconscious much of the time. She had received the Sacrament of the Sick prior to surgery and had requested that no visitors come on the day before the operation because she wanted to make a day of retreat. After the surgery she remarked, "They tell me it could be 90% successful. If it isn't, it's all right. I have had a very full life, and I am ready." When Helen Tichenor, RSCJ, phoned her from Kenwood, Mimi asked, "Please pray for me. It's awesome to be so close to God." She received the Sacrament of the Sick again. Present at her death were three RSCJ: Marina Hernandez, Natalie Runfola, and Marie O'Ryan; Helen Mashburn, an alumna of Barat and close friend who had visited her almost daily; and Matt Gamber, S.J.

Monday, October 8, was the homecoming to Barat. Nearly all the RSCJ in the Chicago-Lake Forest area were able to be present for the levee du corps at noon and/or the Mass of Christian burial at 2 o'clock. Detroit and Omaha were represented as well as St. Louis, with Rosemary Bearss and Judy Cagney.

Kathleen Hughes had prepared a beautiful introductory rite. We processed into the chapel with lighted tapers, the coffin following, and we sang "Jesus, Remember Me." Prayers and readings followed, then Janet Stuart's hymn "Spirit Seeking Light and Beauty." Meanwhile, faculty, present and past, trustees, many alumnae, and friends arrived and shared their memories, their sorrow, and their gratitude. Jean Kurth and her family were with us.

Father Gilbert Ostdiek, O.F.M., from C.T.U. presided at the 2 o'clock liturgy. Father Andrew Bialas, C.S.V., former faculty member of Barat, was concelebrant, and Matt Gamber, S.J., served as acolyte. The Barat Singers under the direction of Dr. Jeffrey Wasson were joined by the congregation. Rosemary Bearss gave a most beautiful homily. The chapel was full. After the mass came the procession to our cemetery at the northwest end of the campus. Despite the rain, most people walked. Eight young men, Barat students, were pallbearers.

Au revoir, Mimi. May you rest in peace and joy.