



December 2023



While many are feeling discouraged about the outcome of the recent Ohio Issue One vote, life remains precious from conception to natural death. At the Maria Stein Shrine, prayers continue to be offered daily for our hearts and minds to be open to God's Will and to respect life at all stages. Central to our mission, we hope and pray the Shrine will continue to be a place where families like the Arkenbergs will experience healing.

The Arkenberg's lives were impacted when surgery was not an option for their newborn son, but hope and prayer prevailed.

Theresa Richards, originally from Russia, Ohio had grown up visiting the Shrine with her parents and siblings. She has warm memories from her childhood of praying in the chapel during Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament and visiting with the Sisters of the Precious Blood. She married Ben Arkenberg in 1948 and they continued the family tradition of visits to the Shrine.

Ben and Theresa were overjoyed by the blessing of family. They were expecting their second child. Her pregnancy had gone smoothly, but at the time of the delivery, the doctor was concerned. Their baby was so low on oxygen it caused him to be discolored. They later learned that this was due to an underdeveloped heart valve. Surgery was not an option. After an eleven-day stay in the hospital, the parents, Theresa and Ben, were advised to take baby Ed home and care for him. They knew they would have to be dedicated and fight for their child's life. They were warned that Ed's crying would put too much strain on his heart. This meant constant care, meeting his every need before he began to cry. This took additional commitment from Theresa and Ben.

They had love and support from family and friends. A family friend, Regina, lived across the street from the Shrine and she was also the mother of two of the Sisters of the Precious Blood. Regina provided the Arkenbergs with a miraculous medal that had been touched to the relics at the Shrine, making it a third-class relic. Theresa placed the miraculous medal in Ed's bassinet. She continued with constant care for Ed and spent many hours in prayer for him as well as asking the Saints to intercede for Ed's needs.

When they returned to their doctor, for Ed's sixth-month checkup, they were astounded to learn that Ed was completely cured, and his heart valve was normal. Praise be to God!



Theresa continued to pray in the chapels for many years with her husband, Ben. Currently, Theresa and her son Ed, shown in the photo, are members of the Adoration Guild at the Maria Stein Shrine. They visit the Shrine weekly for prayer and Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament.

Theresa shared "Life is filled with ups and downs and we are so thankful for the graces that we receive from our time in Adoration. Life is better when we make time to pray."

Please consider a gift to this peaceful place today, offering hope through faith and prayer. Your generosity today can help continue the prayerful support to pilgrims and visitors of the Shrine. Can we count on your support?

You may make your gift in honor of or in memory of a loved one. For your convenience go online to mariasteinshrine.org or use the enclosed envelope. God continues to provide through you! May it bring you joy to support something that you believe in.

May this prayerful season of Advent bring you closer to Christ,

Mark E. Travis

Mark E. Travis
Executive Director

Diana Russell
Director of Fund Development

I want to support a place where hope and prayer prevail!



< Theresa and her family also enjoyed the Swiss Coffee Shop run by the Sisters of the Precious Blood years ago.

We were happy to share the news about the Brunner Bake Shop at the Shrine in 2023. >

