**KLOYDA, Sister M. Thomas à Kempis.** May 15, 1896–March 19, 1977.
College of Saint Teresa (BA 1920), University of Michigan (MA 1926, PhD 1936).

Sister Mary Thomas à Kempis Kloyda was born Sophia Kloyda, the first of three children of Mary (Kurash) (1875–1954) and John L. Kloyda (1869–1940). Her mother was born in Iowa and her father in Prague, Bohemia. According to the 1900 census, her father immigrated to the United States in 1882 and was later naturalized. In 1900 her parents had been married five years and there were two children: Sophia, age four, born in Manly, Iowa, and George, born in July 1899 in Minnesota. The household also contained Mary Kloyda, age fifty, Sophia Kloyda's paternal grandmother. The family was living in Jackson, Minnesota, just north of the Iowa border, and her father worked as a bartender. The third child was Agnes (1902–1993). In 1920 and 1930 the family was living in Minneapolis, where her father worked as a machinist. In the 1930 census her mother was described as operator of a sewing machine.

Sophia Kloyda earned her diploma from Columbus High School in Austin, Minnesota, in 1914. She taught second and third grades the following year. In the fall of 1915 she entered the College of Saint Teresa (now closed), a private college for women sponsored by the Sisters of Saint Frances, in Winona, Minnesota. She was in residence there until 1918 and entered the Novitiate of the Sisters of Saint Francis in Rochester, Minnesota, in January 1918. She was again in residence at the college during 1919–20 and received her bachelor's degree in June 1920 with a major in mathematics and minors in botany and Latin. She was also an instructor at St. Claire Academy 1917–20.

After her graduation from college, Sister M. Thomas à Kempis taught for four years in high schools: in Minnesota 1920–22 and in Ohio 1922–24. In the summer of 1922 she began her graduate work at the University of Michigan and completed all of her work for the master's degree in November 1926 with courses taken every summer except that of 1925. She was principal of Saint Augustine High School in Minnesota during 1924–26.

In the fall of 1926 Sister Thomas à Kempis began teaching physics at the College of Saint Teresa, where she had done her undergraduate work, while also continuing her graduate work in mathematics at Michigan. She studied at Michigan during the summers of 1928 and 1929, the academic years 1930–31 and 1934–35, and again in the summer of 1935 for work on her dissertation, which she subsequently completed in the history of mathematics under the direction of Louis C. Karpinski. She received her doctorate in February 1936, a year after Sister M. Leontius Schulte, also a student of Karpinski at Michigan and her colleague at the College of Saint Teresa. The following year she published an article summarizing her study of linear and quadratic equations in Europe from 1550 to 1660; the article included a bibliography of primary sources on that topic.

Sister M. Thomas à Kempis continued her work at the College of Saint Teresa. She was head of the physics department for several years before serving as head of the mathematics department 1939–49. Her work at the college was interrupted for five years when she was asked to serve as principal of Saint Mary High School in Sleepy Eye, Minnesota, 1949–50 and of Saint Joseph High School in Ironton,

Ohio, 1950–53; she was instructor of mathematics and science at Cotter Senior High School in Winona, Minnesota, 1953–54.

In 1954 Sister M. Thomas à Kempis returned to the College of Saint Teresa, where she was again head of the department of mathematics 1954–69 and professor of mathematics from 1969 until her retirement from full-time service in 1972. During her years at the College of Saint Teresa, she was active professionally, especially with the Minnesota Section of the MAA, for which she was section chairman in 1934–35 and a member of the executive committee 1935–36, 1939–40, and 1962–63. She taught in NSF institutes for elementary school teachers during the summers of 1963 and 1964 and was a consultant at Florida Agricultural and Mechanical University during the summer of 1965. She was a member of the Minnesota Academy of Science. She wrote a number of articles during her professional life. Most were historical articles about individual mathematicians, many of whom were women.

Sister Mary Thomas à Kempis Kloyda worked part time at the college until September 1976, when she was eighty, at which time she was forced by failing eyesight and general health considerations to move to the Assisi Heights Motherhouse in Rochester, Minnesota. She died the following spring at Saint Mary's Hospital in Rochester and was buried in Calvary Cemetery in Rochester.

**Organizational affiliations:** MAA, NCTM, Sigma Xi.

**Dissertation:**
**1936** Linear and quadratic equations, 1550–1660. PhD dissertation, University of Michigan, directed by Louis Charles Karpinski. Printed version, 1938, Edwards Brothers, Ann Arbor, MI; review: *JFM* 64.0911.02 (K. Vogel). See also **1937**.

**Publications:**
**1934** [Thomas à Kempis, Sister M.] Newton's Blind Apostle, Nicholas Saunderson. *Sch. Sci. Math.* 34:569–73.
**1937** Linear and quadratic equations 1550–1660. *Osiris* 3:165–92. Published version of PhD dissertation. Reviews: *Isis Critical Bibliography* 29:258; *JFM* 63.0805.01 (J. E. Hofmann).
**1939a** [Thomas à Kempis, Sister M.] An appreciation of Sophie Germain. *Natl. Math. Mag.* 14:81–90. Review: *JFM* 65.0015.02 (J. E. Hofmann). Presented to the MAA, Northfield, MN, 13 May 1939; abstract: *Amer. Math. Monthly* 46:533 #3.
**1939b** [Thomas à Kempis, Sister M.] The walking polyglot. *Scripta Math.* 6:211–17. Presented as "The walking polyglot (Maria Gaetana Agnesi)" to the MAA, Northfield, MN, 12 May 1934.
**1955** [Thomas à Kempis, Sister M.] Caroline Herschel. *Scripta Math.* 21:237–51.
**1966** [Thomas à Kempis, Sister M.] Mathematics and the Nobel Prize. *Math. Teacher* 59:667–68.
**1967** In *New Catholic Encyclopedia*, New York: McGraw-Hill. Agnesi, Maria Gaetana, 1:205; Barrow, Isaac, 2:126; Bolzano, Bernhard, 2:653, review: *J. Symbolic Logic* 40:596 (A. Church); Boncompagni, Balthasar, 2:664; Cantor, Georg, 3:70–71; Euler, Leonhard, 5:630; Gauss, Karl Friedrich, 6:309–10; Hermite, Charles, 6:1077; Hilbert, David, 6:1116; L'Hospital, Guillaume François (L'Hôpital), 8:692; Lobachevskiĭ, Nikolaĭ Ivanovich, 8:947; Ruffini, Paolo, 12:700.

**Abstracts not listed above:**
**1944** [Thomas à Kempis, Sister M.] A study: Caroline Herschel. *Amer. Math. Monthly* 51:614 #6. Presented to the MAA, St. Paul, MN, 6 May 1944.
**1945** [Thomas à Kempis, Sister M.] Bernard Bolzano. *Amer. Math. Monthly* 52:480 #6. Presented to the MAA, St. Paul, MN, 12 May 1945.

**Presentation not listed above:**
Some reminiscences of Raymond Clare Archibald. Presented to the MAA, St. Paul, MN, 30 Apr 1966.

**References to:** AmMSc 6–8, 9P–11P; AmMWSc 12P–13P; OutEdAm 1975.

**Other sources:** Owens questionnaires 1937, 1940; College of Saint Teresa Alumnae Office; University of Michigan Alumni Records Office; University of Michigan Graduate School; communication with Sisters of Saint Francis, Rochester, MN; US Census 1900, 1920, 1930 MN.

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