



Sisters of St. Francis of Mary Immaculate

In the quiet of late evening, May 7, 2020, in the month of Mary, our Sister Mary completed the last leg of her journey to God amidst the isolation of shelter-in-place due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Two weeks from her 104th birthday, Mary was living her faith journey moment to moment, waiting to meet her God. She wanted her Franciscan Crown near her. The mysteries in the life of the Virgin Mary were her mysteries as well. Mary had written in reflection that she looked daily on the meaning of both the Sorrowful and Joyful Mysteries in her daily life, often both sorrow and joy following one another. And she could hear God's call often during each day to live "the duty of the moment," just like Jesus, just like His mother Mary.

Born May 23, 1916, to Rosa (Miller) and Joseph Franz in Columbus, Ohio, Mary Elizabeth was one of twelve siblings, nine brothers and two sisters. Having lost her mother on her 10th birthday and her father when she was eighteen and a first year novice, Mary was aware that the moral and spiritual values she learned in those early years from her parents lived on in her and through her large extended family who remained important to her throughout her life. She was aware that she received from them a living faith and a care and compassion for others and for the world.

Deeply rooted in German Village, Mary started her education with the Joliet Franciscans at St. Mary's Catholic Parish in German Village, Columbus, Ohio. At sixteen she entered the convent in Joliet, Illinois, and finished her high school work at St. Francis Academy. She went on to receive a bachelor's degree in mathematics at the present University of St. Francis and a master's degree from DePaul University in Chicago, Illinois.

Sister Mary spent 30 years in schools teaching math, biology and religion or administrating throughout the grades, mostly in high schools and college in Illinois and Ohio. She spent four years in the congregation business office before she stepped into another form of education and accepted the Congregation responsibility as Director of Postulants, ever faithful to the "duty of the moment."

During the turbulence of the 70s, Mary began a shift into Pastoral Ministry. At age sixty she took a year sabbatical in order to study Clinical Pastoral Education along with workshops in RCIA. With this preparation Mary began what would be two decades of Pastoral Ministry in Ohio in parishes whose members became very dear to her. Her ministry included RCIA, ministry to the sick, the homebound, the hospitalized and the bereaved. Her pastoral work continued when she moved into semi-retirement in her 80s. She continued with scripture sharing groups, tutoring as a second language, and founded a parish project to create and send computer designed cards to anyone over sixty-five for birthdays

Alleluia!



Sister Mary Franz, OSF

and special occasions. Sister Mary, ever challenged by "the duty of the moment" responded to the needs she met and learned to adapt to changing times.

Returning to Joliet, Sister Mary lived at Guardian Angel Home until it was sold in 2014. At ninety-eight years of age Mary moved to independent living at Our Lady of Angels, followed by moves to assisted and then nursing care. Her pastoral ministry continued throughout these years. She responded to the opportunities that presented themselves. She talked and worked and prayed with women and children at Groundwork, greeted and welcomed new residents at OLA, organized card games, visited residents, prayed with the dying, participated in any talks or programs that she could, always a life-long learner. All of this outreach became more and more difficult as hearing, eyesight and even walking became difficult or impossible, but Mary continued to care about those around her when she had the opportunity and the ability, living "the duty of the moment" and learning to receive from others.

Special retreats and vacations were an important part of Mary's memories. To be able to experience directed retreats for most of her religious life was a gift to her. She especially treasured the chance to be a pilgrim in Assisi, Italy, and participate in a retreat at the in Abbey of Gethsemani in Kentucky. Vacations were opportunities to revel in God's creation and wonders with family, friends and Sisters. These occasions allowed her to hike, climb, raft and explore all over the United States and beyond. Mary loved games, puzzles, books, music, walking, gardening, cooking and keeping up with computer projects and friends. She enjoyed people.

Every morning Mary blessed herself and prayed the words, "another day for God, another day for heaven." And now she is with God in heaven where she can live every moment praising God in glory and peace. Amen Alleluia.

Sister Mary Franz, OSF

May 23, 1916— May 7, 2020

<i>Born:</i>	May 23, 1916
<i>Parents:</i>	Joseph H. Franz and Rosa (Miller) Franz
<i>Postulancy:</i>	September 8, 1932
<i>Novitiate:</i>	August 12, 1933
<i>First Profession:</i>	August 12, 1935
<i>Final Profession:</i>	August 12, 1938
<i>Entered New Life:</i>	May 7, 2020

Ministry History

1935—1937	Teacher: Grades 6 and 7, St. Bernard, Joliet, Illinois
1937—1939	Student: College of St. Francis, Joliet
1939—1942	Teacher: Physics, Mathematics, Geometry, Physics, Algebra, German, St. Francis Academy, Joliet
1942—1949	Teacher: Religion, Science, Geometry, Algebra, Geometry, Biology / Advisor: Our Lady Committee of BVM Sodality and Science Club
1949—1950	Teacher: Sacred Heart, Englewood: Religion, Algebra, Geometry, Biology, Chemistry / Advisor: Science Club / Chairman: CCSTA
1950—1957	Teacher: Biology, Math / Moderator: Science Club, College of St. Francis, Joliet 1957—1959 Teacher: Religion, Biology, Algebra, Geometry, Chemistry / Moderator: Bio-Chem Club, Visual Aids
1959—1960	Teacher: Biology, Chemistry, Algebra / Moderator: Photo and Science Clubs / Audio-Visual Community Member
1960—1967	Directress of Postulants: St. Francis Convent, Joliet
1967—1968	Superior: Bishop Ready High School, Columbus, Ohio
1968—1969	Teacher: Algebra, Biology, Bishop Ready High School, Columbus
1969—1971	Principal: St. Mary Grade School, Columbus
1971—1973	Business Office: St. Francis Convent, Joliet, Illinois
1973—1974	Business Office Staff: Motherhouse, Joliet
1974—1975	Business Office Staff: College of St. Francis / Adult Education Teacher: Hill Center, Joliet
1975—1976	Parish Ministry: St. John the Baptist, Fort Lauderdale, Florida
1976—1977	CPE Training: Mercy Hospital, Des Moines, Iowa
1977—1978	Pastoral Ministry: St. Mary, Marion, Ohio
1978—1985	Associate Pastor: St. Mary, Marion
1985—1995	Pastoral Associate: St. Christopher, Columbus, Ohio
1995—1996	Volunteer: St. John Convent, Logan, Ohio
1996—1997	Volunteer: Columbus, Ohio
1997—2004	Pastoral Visitor and Volunteer: St. Elizabeth Parish, Columbus, Ohio
2004—2016	Community Service: Our Lady of Angels Retirement Home, Joliet
2016—2019	Presence to residents and staff at OLA / visits and prayer with terminally ill
2019—2020	Prayer Ministry

<i>Burial:</i>	Saturday, May 23, 2020, no procession. General Administration of Congregation will meet Sister's remains at the burial site for prayer. Resurrection Cemetery, Romeoville, Illinois.
<i>Interment:</i>	Plot 343, Grave 10
<i>Predeceased by:</i>	Her parents: Joseph H. Franz and Rosa (Miller) Franz, her brothers: Cornelius, Clarence, Joseph, Robert, Herman, Otto, George and Edward; and her sisters: Elizabeth, Bertha and Amelia
<i>Survived by:</i>	Numerous nieces and nephews and her grand niece, Sister Mary Rose Lieb

Rest in Peace, Sister Mary!