



## *Sisters of St. Francis of Mary Immaculate*

In the evening of June 14, 2021, Sister Dorothy Clare's deepest desire was fulfilled as she passed peacefully from this life into eternal life. She desired to be with her loving God and to be reunited with her family in eternity.

Some months prior to her passing she told her family and dear friends that she was failing in health and felt she would soon be in the loving embrace of God.

Covid restrictions at Our Lady of Angels Retirement Home brought with it many challenges for staff, residents and their families. When some of the restrictions were lifted, Dorothy was able to visit with some of her friends and out of state family members, which was balm for her spirit. She was very close to nieces and nephews.

Born on December 14, 1928, in Cleveland, Ohio, Elsie was the second child welcomed into life by her parents Elizabeth and Willard Zuleski and her older sister Dorothy. Several years later, her brother Clarence was born.

Elsie was educated at St. Procopius grade school and high school in Cleveland, Ohio. She received her Bachelor of Arts degree in English and History from Notre Dame College in South Euclid, Ohio, graduating in 1950. Three months later she entered the postulancy. The following year, she was received into the novitiate. Elsie was given the name Dorothy Clare, which honored her brother's and sister's names. In 1953, she made first profession and final vows in 1956.

As a young child, even before she started school, Elsie remembered seeing two Franciscan Sisters walking to a corner mailbox. She told people she knew then that she wanted to be a Sister and a librarian, happily she got to do both. Her father was a barber and her brother followed in his dad's footsteps. She held dear her father's barber scissors that she kept in remembrance of him. During the pandemic she even received a hair cut in her room with those treasured scissors.

Sister Dorothy Clare began her ministry in the field of education, serving as a teacher at the elementary, secondary and collegiate levels in Ohio, Illinois and Florida. For two years, she taught English and was assistant librarian at Saint Francis Academy. Then in 1962 she taught library science courses and was assistant librarian at the College of Saint Francis. Later Dorothy would happily tell people, "On a cold winter day, while serving as assistant librarian at CSF, I got a phone call saying I was being transferred to awesome Cardinal Gibbons High School in Ft. Lauderdale, Florida! WOW, this warmed my heart as I don't like cold weather!"

# *Alleluia!*



## *Sister M. Dorothy Clare Zuleski, OSF*

And we know it also warmed her body which made for one happy sister!

After years of teaching, Dorothy was drawn to work with adults in religious related areas and took CPE courses at MacNeal Hospital in Berwyn, Illinois. She started her hospital ministry as a chaplain at Provena St. Joseph Medical Center, that lasted for fifteen years. Chaplain ministry meant a great deal to Dorothy. She said, "This experience opened my eyes to a whole new world, and my heart to God's hurting people. I continue to thank God for this invaluable ministerial experience."

As her prayer within deepened, Dorothy felt the call to minister at the House of Prayer, then in Kankakee, Illinois, and later in Joliet. In discernment, these words spoke to her heart, "Come apart, rest awhile, but do not remain inactive." "Be still and KNOW that I am God." "What you do to the least of my people, you do unto me."

Close to her heart was Dorothy's desire to honor our Lady by developing a plan and complete a natural grotto with a statue of Our Lady of Lourdes, adjacent to the banks of the Kankakee River. She enhanced her ministry by completing a spiritual companion program offered through the Joliet Diocese. She was a prayer partner, spiritual companion, retreat leader and a vital member of the contemplative community at Saint Clare House of Prayer.

In all of creation, Dorothy saw God. In the flowers that popped up in spring, the birds in the trees. In the fall when leaves turn to gold, red and orange, "Praise God" was her hymn of thanksgiving.

With gratitude and joy for Sr. Dorothy Clare's life and legacy, we say: "Alleluia, Alleluia."

## *Sister M. Dorothy Clare, OSF*

*December 14, 1928 — June 14, 2021*

*Born:* December 14, 1928  
*Parents:* Willard F. Zuleski and Elizabeth Stankievicz  
*Postulancy:* September 4, 1950  
*Novitiate:* August 12, 1951  
*First Profession:* August 12, 1953  
*Final Profession:* August 13, 1956  
*Entered New Life:* June 14, 2021

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### **Ministry History**

1953-1958 Teacher: Religion, English, First Aid, Marian Program, Sophomore Homeroom, St. Procopius High School, Chicago, Illinois  
1958-1959 Teacher: Sophomore Homeroom, Religion, Safety, English, Speech, Junior Red Cross, St. Mary High School, Columbus, Ohio  
1959-1962 Teacher: Junior Homeroom, English, Assistant Librarian, Junior Red Cross, Literature Committee, St. Francis Academy, Joliet, Illinois  
1962-1968 Library: College of St. Francis, Joliet  
1968-1972 Teacher: English, Library, Freshman Homeroom, Library Club, Cardinal Gibbons High School, Fort Lauderdale, Florida  
1972-1973 Guidance Counselor: Cardinal Gibbons High School, Fort Lauderdale  
1973-1976 Librarian: St. Francis Academy, Joliet, Illinois  
1976-1977 Sabbatical  
1977-1980 Librarian: St. Francis Academy, Joliet, Illinois  
1980-1985 Teacher: Religion, St. Ann, Lansing, Illinois  
1985-1986 Student: MacNeal Memorial Hospital, Berwyn, Illinois  
1986-1987 Staff Member: St. Joseph Medical Center, Joliet, Illinois  
1987-2000 Chaplain: St. Joseph Medical Center: Joliet  
2001-2002 Temporary Member: St. Clare House of Prayer, Kankakee, Illinois  
2002-2008 Core Member: St. Clare House of Prayer, Kankakee  
2008-2013 Contemplative Community Member: Congregation  
2013-2021 Community Service: Our Lady of Angels, Joliet, Illinois

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*Prayer Service and Burial:* Monday, June 21, 2021: Resurrection Cemetery, Romeoville, Illinois  
*Interment:* Plot 344, Grave 8  
*Predeceased by:* Her parents, Willard F. Zuleski and Elizabeth Stankievicz  
*Survived by:* Nieces and nephews

*Rest in Peace, Sister Dorothy Clare!*