



Sisters of St. Francis of Mary Immaculate

As midnight approached on the evening of January 24, 2017, our sister, Mary Nicholas Tosseng, took her final breath and passed peacefully into the embrace of the gracious God to whom she committed her life. Reassuring Sr. Nicholas and those who loved her that she would not die alone, the Sisters at OLA were at her bedside, keeping vigil and providing a prayerful presence throughout the day and evening. At the time of her death, Sr. Rosemary Fonck was with her at her bedside. Indeed, a bit of Mother Alfred's spirit was present as well, as two of her daughters with Luxembourg roots exemplified the witness and meaning of Franciscan sisterhood through life and in death.

Born on February 24, 1928, Pauline Marie Tosseng, was one of four children born to her parents, Helen Powell and Nicholas Tosseng. Growing up on Chicago's Eastside, in the company of her two brothers and her sister, Pauline endeavored to make the most of her God-given talents. Though quiet and reserved on the outside, she was creative, resourceful and determined to prove that adversity in any form could not diminish the faith, hope and love of the family and neighbors she cherished. Educated at St. Francis de Sales grade school and high school, Pauline was no stranger to the Joliet Franciscans who influenced her childhood and adolescence while inspiring her to consider a religious vocation.

On September 2, 1947, Pauline made her way to Joliet, Illinois, where she entered the postulancy of the Sisters of St. Francis of Mary Immaculate and enrolled in the College of St. Francis. She was received into the novitiate the following year along with her 21 classmates who constituted a most diverse group of remarkable novices. She was given the religious name, Sister Mary Nicholas and, while grateful to bear her father's name, she also was delighted to share in the legacy of the famous and beloved bishop of Myra whose feast day heralded the coming of Christmas. On August 12, 1950, Sr. Nicholas professed her religious vows and a future of 37 years as an educator began to unfold. From teaching Kindergarten at Guardian Angel Home to seventh grade at St. Joseph School in Elgin, she found her greatest joy teaching mathematics to students in the middle grades. Missioned to various parochial schools in Northern Illinois, many of

Alleluia!



Sister M. Nicholas Tosseng, OSF

her years were spent in Chicago's inner city at St. Francis of Assisi, St. Ludmilla, Assumption BVM and St. Francis de Sales. A lifelong learner, she was ahead of the times when it came to taking advantage of opportunities to learn Spanish at the Mexican American Cultural Center and to couple that with classes in computer theory and programming. But, there was much more to Sr. Nicholas' life in mission than what transpired in her classrooms.

As an avid cook and baker, Sr. Nicholas was a welcomed addition to the local communities in which she lived and the parishes in which she served. No one went hungry or without seasonal treats fresh from the convent kitchen. Rarely, would a guest or visitor leave empty handed. A practical and precise seamstress when it came to habits, skirts, veils, baptismal outfits, kitchen curtains or living room drapes, Sr. Nicholas' sewing machine was well-maintained and ready for action. And long before there was Uber, Sr. Nicholas was a generous and on-call motorist whose shuttle service between Chicago and Joliet was legendary. A parish secretary at St. Tarcissus, a sacristan for the chaplain at Cook County Jail, and a multi-tasking minister ready to assist anyone in need, Sr. Nicholas often worked invisibly behind the scenes. A self-sacrificing and hard-working woman of prayer, her concern and affection for those whom she loved as daughter, grand-daughter, sister, cousin, aunt, great-aunt, friend, teacher, companion, care-giver and Franciscan sister was without limits.

We will miss you "Sr. Nicky" and with deep gratitude, we give thanks to God and thanks to you for sharing the gift of your life with us so faithfully these past 69 years. May you rest joyfully in the peace of Christ for all eternity. Alleluia. Alleluia.

Sister Nicholas Tosseng, OSF

February 24, 1928— January 24, 2017

| | |
|--------------------------|---|
| <i>Born:</i> | February 24, 1928 |
| <i>Parents:</i> | Nicholas Tosseng and Helen (Powell) Tosseng |
| <i>Postulancy:</i> | September 2, 1947 |
| <i>Novitiate:</i> | August 12, 1948 |
| <i>First Profession:</i> | August 12, 1950 |
| <i>Final Profession:</i> | August 13, 1953 |
| <i>Entered New Life:</i> | January 24, 2017 |

Ministry History

| | |
|-----------|--|
| 1950-1954 | Teacher: Grade 4, St. Joseph, Joliet, Illinois |
| 1954-1955 | Teacher: Grade 4, St. Francis of Assisi; Kindergarten, Guardian Angel Home, Joliet |
| 1955-1961 | Teacher: Grades 5, 6, 7, St. Joseph, Elgin, Illinois |
| 1961-1963 | Teacher: Grades 6 and 7, St. Stephen, Streator, Illinois |
| 1963-1967 | Teacher: Grade 7, St. Francis de Sales, Chicago, Illinois |
| 1967-1968 | Teacher: Grade 7, St. Rita, Aurora, Illinois |
| 1968-1984 | Teacher: Grades 5 and 6, Assumption, Chicago |
| 1984-1987 | Teacher: Grade 5, St. Ludmilla, Chicago |
| 1987-1989 | Receptionist/Secretary: St. Tarcissus, Chicago |
| 1989-1996 | Clerical Ministry: St. Tarcissus, Chicago |
| 1996-2005 | Parish Secretary: St. Tarcissus, Chicago |
| 2005-2009 | Clerical Service: St. Tarcissus, Chicago |
| 2009-2016 | Volunteer: St. Tarcissus, Chicago |

| | |
|----------------------------------|--|
| <i>Wake:</i> | Monday, January 30, 2017, 2:00-6:45 p.m., Our Lady of Angels, Joliet |
| <i>Prayer Service:</i> | Monday, January 30, 2017, 4:45 p.m., Our Lady of Angels, Joliet |
| <i>Mass of Christian Burial:</i> | Monday, January 30, 2017, 7:00 p.m., Our Lady of Angels, Joliet |
| <i>Burial:</i> | Tuesday, January 30, 2017, leaving Our Lady of Angels at 9:00 a.m. to Resurrection Cemetery, Romeoville, Illinois |
| <i>Interment:</i> | Section 8, Lot 343, Grave 4, Resurrection Cemetery |
| <i>Predeceased by:</i> | By her parents, Nicholas Tosseng and Helen (Powell) Tosseng, her brothers, Nicholas and George, and her sister, Gertrude Pietranczyk |
| <i>Survived by:</i> | Nieces and nephews |

Rest in Peace, Sister Nicholas!