

# Always in Our Hearts

*A collection of  
reflections for  
those Sisters  
who died during  
the COVID 19  
pandemic*





# Always in Our Hearts

<i>Name</i>	<i>Date of Death</i>	<i>Reflection By</i>
<b><i>Sister Elizabeth Marie Klepec</i></b>	March 8, 2020	Sr. Anita Beloin
<b><i>Sister Mary Franz</i></b>	May 7, 2020	Sr. Peggy Quinn and Sr. Sue Bruno
<b><i>Sister Mary Berendt</i></b>	June 11, 2020	Sr. Carol Jander
<b><i>Sister Margaret Rose Szesniak</i></b>	September 5, 2020	Sr. Rosemary Huzl
<b><i>Sister Clare Wand</i></b>	November 8, 2020	Sr. Sharon Frederick
<b><i>Sister Lauren Wiegman</i></b>	February 17, 2021	Sr. Margaret Hoffman
<b><i>Sister Elaine Murphy</i></b>	March 20, 2021	Sr. Jeanne Bessette
<b><i>Sister Anna Konrath</i></b>	April 17, 2021	Sr. Lourdes Boyer
<b><i>Sister Nadine Overbeck</i></b>	May 2, 2021	Sr. Peggy Quinn
<b><i>Sister Felicity (Joy) Gaffney</i></b>	June 5, 2021	Sr. Roberta Naegele
<b><i>Sister Dorothy Clare Zuleski</i></b>	June 14, 2021	Sr. Dolores Zemont
<b><i>Sister Margaret Ann Zimmerman</i></b>	April 28, 2022	Sr. Roberta Naegele

# *Sr. Elizabeth Marie Klepec*



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***“I will make with you an everlasting covenant.”***

Entered Life:  
**5 February 1928**  
Entered Religious Life:  
**4 September 1946**  
Entered Eternal Life:  
**8 March 2020**  
Interment:  
St. Joseph Cemetery



**First Reading: Isaiah 55: 1-3**

**Second Reading: Philippians 2: 5-11**

**Gospel: Matthew 13: 44-46**

## *Reflection by Sr. Anita Beloin*

Sister Elizabeth Marie found the hidden treasure and the pearl of great price. In Jesus and through God’s Spirit, she found the kingdom of heaven on earth. She gave her whole life following the path God prepared for her. Part of her journey included a “call within a call.” She knew, in the depths of her being, that she was a Joliet Franciscan, but was also called to live a more contemplative life. This desire led her to suggest to the Congregation the formation of a House of Prayer, which was approved by the Chapter of 1968.

In 1969, Sister Elizabeth Marie came to the “waters.” She, along with Sisters Frances Osterhaus, Laura Filipas and Agnes Ferber began this new ministry in an old farm house

on the banks of the Kankakee River. St. Clare House of Prayer would become the first contemplative house in the Joliet diocese. In Philippians we read that Jesus did not count equality with God a thing to be grasped, but emptied himself taking on the form of a servant. He completely gave his life for us. Jesus is Lord to the glory of God the Father. God has given us the fullness of divinity in the humanity of Jesus.

Jesus was central to Elizabeth Marie’s life, not just as a religious symbol but as a lived presence. On one of her bookmarks she copied a quote from Esther De Waal that spoke to her heart. It reads: “Uncrowd my heart, O God, until silence speaks in your still small voice; turn me from the hearing of words, and the making of words, and the confusion of much speaking, to listening, waiting, stillness,

silence.” Another quote was captured on the back of the bookmark: “O God, I commend to you this time and ask you to bless and strengthen me in my heartfelt search for that silence and stillness in which I pray I shall find you and you will find me.”

If you knew Sr. Elizabeth Marie, you knew the smile that radiated from her being. Issac of Stella, a 12th century Cistercian, says it well and captures the depth of Sr. Elizabeth’s smile. “Let the Son of God grow in thee, for He is formed in thee. Let Him become immense in thee, and may He become a great smile and exultation and perfect joy.”

When Sr. Elizabeth Marie became novitiate minister in 1967, she decided to give her novices a hand written personal letter as her Christmas gift to each of them. She began with the large class of second year novices. It was a very time consuming project, and she soon found herself running out of time. So she decided to give each one of the first year novices a holy card, and using her gift of calligraphy wrote the word “Jesus” on the back of each card. She said that no more needed to be added, “Jesus” said it all. (I am one of her first year novices. I share with you this holy card of 50 plus years. The front depicts the Jerusalem cross along with flowers from the Holy Lands, and on the back - simply and profoundly the word “Jesus.”)

Elizabeth Marie loved her times of solitude, and she loved community life, her family and her times with others as a teacher, spiritual companion or friend. In response to the

question, “How do I want to be remembered?” Sr. Elizabeth Marie wrote: “Throughout my life, God has blessed me with a faithful and loving family, a vocation to Franciscan life, many dear friends, and ministries that I have loved. I am so grateful for all!”

One of Sr. Elizabeth’s major contributions to our Congregation was revising our Constitutions. She brought to prayer all the feedback she received from the membership, and guided by the Holy Spirit brought to birth our new Constitutions. She decided to begin and end the document in Jesus’ name. The first line reads, “Jesus is the Eternal Word of the Father, spoken in love. Through His grace, we, the Sisters of St. Francis of Mary Immaculate respond in love with our word, these Constitutions.” She ends the document with these words: “May we live the Gospel of Jesus so that ‘through Him and with Him and in Him’ our lives may give glory to God. May we spread the Gospel of Jesus so that all people will proclaim ‘Jesus is Lord!’ ”

Dear Elizabeth Marie, thank you for being a mirror, showing us the face of Christ.



I ♥ English

# Sr. Mary Franz



Original artwork © Sr. Kay Francis Berger, OSF

***“The heavens proclaim  
the glory of God!”***

Entered Life:  
**23 May 1916**  
Entered Religious Life:  
**8 September 1932**  
Entered Eternal Life:  
**7 May 2020**  
Interment:  
Resurrection Cemetery  
Romeoville, Illinois



**First Reading: Ecclesiastes 3:1-8**

**Second Reading: Romans 14: 7-9**

**Gospel: John 6: 37-40**

*Reflection by Sr. Peggy Quinn and Sr. Sue Bruno*

Mary chose these readings for her Resurrection Mass. It is about celebrating life. We recognize the loss and the real pain for those who remain, especially because of the pandemic shut down, but the feel and atmosphere of this service is resurrection not death.

Mary's message to us is that this life journey is about the promise to be with our Lord. But in this life there is time for everything. When we hear that list of life experiences in Ecclesiastes, I smile to think that Mary in her 104 years must have gone through this list many times, learning to accept one thing after the other, only to learn it over again. I can almost hear her saying... There is a time for everything... keep going... keep caring about others.

The Letter to the Romans says it plainly. It

gets right to the point. No one lives or dies for them- selves...we are the Lord's. Jesus is the Lord of both the dead and the living. It really speaks to me of Mary's serious nature, she was serious about her faith, about living every moment fully, about her spiritual practice, her spiritual growth. Anytime she hit a bump in the road I saw her refocus, pray and come to a new commitment, a new peace. In that seriousness there was time for laughter, fun; she had quite a funny bone. She loved beauty, real discussions, wanting to hear every speaker, go to everything she could. But it came down to the central belief expressed in the gospel..."Everyone who sees the Son and believes in him may have eternal life and I shall raise her on the last day."

Sr. Sue....As most of us know, I didn't know Mary in her early years of ministry, only when she was into her 60's did I come to know her and spend time with her. My experience of her was first and foremost, that she was a woman of deep and faithful prayer. She took to heart

that line in our Constitutions: “We rely not on our own strength, but on the power of a loving Father, in whom we place complete trust.” Even when Mary’s eyesight was completely gone, our sisters would gather daily in Mary’s room to pray office with her. When Mary said she would pray for someone, it wasn’t lip service, she would actually pray for that person and that intention. She never failed to ask me about my sister, Lee Ann, reminding me again and again that Lee Ann was in her daily prayers. Towards the end of Mary’s life, as sisters and others would die who were much younger than she, she would wonder out loud, “why not me, I am ready Lord.” But she also knew and believed wholeheartedly that it was the Lord’s timing not hers.

As Peggy alluded to, Mary wanted to attend every public prayer, every program for Spiritual enrichment and every lecture at local churches. Even as she was slowly losing her eyesight and her hearing abilities, Mary kept trying to keep up on the times. One way she did this was to work on her computer, though it wasn’t always easy for her. I can’t tell you the number of times I was called up to her little workspace to help her figure out how to retrieve her materials or reset passwords. She was fiercely independent especially in her later years. At 95, she was gardening at GAH. At some point it became apparent to us that bending over was getting very difficult for Mary. That prompted Al Scheuber to build her a waist high plant box so that she could more easily work with her plants and vegetables.

Mary loved to travel especially with her many nieces and nephews. The entire family was adventurous. If there was a trip planned, she’d be the first asked about her availability. I was fortunate enough to go on a few of those vacations and clearly remember Mary’s stamina, at 75 years old, climbing mountains,

never appearing out of breath while I was nearly hyperventilating! Her last trip, at 101 years old, was to travel from Joliet to Columbus Ohio to attend the funeral of her beloved niece and Bitsy’s Mom, Roseann Lieb. There in Columbus, Mary was so reverently greeted by her many loving nieces and nephews, great nieces and nephews. It was touching and clear to Peggy and myself that there was a genuine love and care for one another.

I remember that she needed a great deal of help getting ready for the day and retiring at nighttime, but she never complained, never grumbled and was immensely grateful for any assistance offered to her. The end of her life reminds me of Jesus asking Peter if he loves Him. In John 21 Jesus tells Peter to feed his sheep, and says, “I tell you solemnly: as a young man you fastened your belt and went about as you pleased; but when you are older you will stretch out your hands, and another will tie you fast and carry you off against your will.” When Mary was young, she was able for many years to “go about as she pleased,” but as she grew older others had to care for her in ways that were difficult for her to imagine or experience. For the most part, Mary took growing old in stride, an example for all of us.

Again, as written in our Constitutions, “Those who were close to us in life we continue to remember after their death.” Mary who was “nourished on the Bread of Life, a sign of our unity and love,” was called into that community we call “the communion of saints” on May 7, 2020. Mary, you were a good and faithful servant. We trust that you are resting in peace while in the loving embrace of our God.



# Sr. Mary Berendt



## *Rejoice and Be Glad* Psalm 118

Entered Life:  
**4 November 1938**  
Entered Religious Life:  
**28 January 1957**  
Entered Eternal Life:  
**11 June 2020**  
Interment:  
Resurrection Cemetery  
Romeoville, Illinois

**First Reading: 2 Timothy 3: 14-17**

**Second Reading: Romans: 12: 9-18**

**Gospel: Matthew 5: 1-12**



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### *Reflection by Sr. Carol Jander*

Mary and I were high school friends.  
Mary was a Buckeye loyalist.

Having referenced these two points, I chose to write this reflection with the analogy of *game* in mind; not with a light-hearted meaning as a board game or card game, but having the meaning of *mission in life*. Mary's mission was to finish her life as a winner in the Lord's game with Jesus the coach and Mary the player.

To win a championship in any game, one has to practice, show progress, fight for one's beliefs and ultimately experience victory.

St. Paul (Philippians 3:10-16) said: "*I press on toward the goal to win the prize for which God has called me heavenward in Christ Jesus.*"

In Mary's mission of life, as with each of us, she didn't always know what to expect but her faith brought her to realize that the Lord would always provide her with everything she would need to fulfill her task. Jesus, the coach, would be her guide.

Remember when Jesus sent his apostles on their mission (into the game) he told them to *take little with them, find friends with whom to stay and the Spirit would be their guide.*"

When Mary entered the Joliet Franciscans in January 1957, she heard the Lord say, "Go, take little with you (perhaps two checkered aprons, two towels and black shoes!) Mary went not knowing exactly what to expect but she was willing to enter the game and follow the Coach's instructions. Again, her faith led her to a deep understanding of the Coach's desire for her to be a winner. Fighting for the championship became her first goal.

Coaches don't often display happiness on the sidelines during a game but save their feelings to the end (if they win!) I remember a conversation I had with Mary once after she was diagnosed with kidney failure. For awhile she was somewhat discouraged. She fought dialysis as long as she could. We talked about whether we believed Jesus ever smiled or laughed. Neither of us could recall that being recorded in scripture. Although Jesus' laughter is not specifically written anywhere, we believed he did evidence happiness when he played with friends as a young boy, when he went fishing with his disciples, when he welcomed children in his arms, and when he saw his friend Lazarus come back to life. Yes, Jesus did smile and have a sense of humor!

A famous comedian once wrote: *"Through humor, you can soften some of the worse blows that life delivers."* In her game of life Mary never lost her sense of humor despite some of the blows that came her way. There was always a humorous come back when challenged with a statement or teased by another.

Belief in the mission led Mary to enrich others lives through teaching. Even when she left the full-time classroom, she remained in education by tutoring. Players in the game don't always have things go their way and sometimes they are forced to be "pulled from the ranks." It was a difficult "pull" when Mary had to come home to Joliet due to failing health.

While at OLA, she continued to brighten others' days with a cheerful smile, joke or suggestion as she went about on her RED scooter. Many of us contributed to the weekly football pool as she cheered on her beloved OSU. She joined the enrichment

classes and when it was time to paint, her choice of color was always RED.

Mary was a loyal friend and sister to many. She was a true player on God's team.

Scripture quotes Jesus as saying, *"In my father's house there are many mansions."* When we arrive in paradise, Mary's mansion will be easy to recognize. It's the one with the RED flag hanging outside. **OHIO!** Mary, rest in peace, fellow Buckeye.



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# Sr. Margaret Rose Sczesniak



## *“United in Love”*

Entered Life:  
**25 December 1932**  
Entered Religious Life:  
**4 September 1950**  
Entered Eternal Life:  
**5 September 2020**  
Interment:  
Resurrection Cemetery  
Romeoville, Illinois

**First Reading: Micah 6: 6, 8**

**Second Reading: Corinthians 12: 25-27**

**Gospel: Matthew 5: 3-10**



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## *Reflection by Sr. Rosemary Huzl*

The selection of passages from the Bible is an important part of planning a funeral liturgy because we want to turn to God's word for wisdom and comfort in our time of loss, but we also want readings that reflect the life of the person we are remembering. The Word of God is at the heart of our Christian celebration of faith.

In the first reading, the prophet Micah asks “what is it that the Lord requires of us...” Sister Margaret Rose found many ways to answer this question, most of the ways being in the field of education, but finding ministries of service wherever she lived. Sister Margaret Rose's faith was always connected with her actions.

Her educational ministry encompassed 26 years in elementary education as teacher or principal,

ESL and GED and 21 years in the field of educational administration.

In her later years, “to WALK humbly with her God” took on a whole different meaning since it became more difficult physically. In scripture the walk metaphor is used to describe the overall direction one's life is heading. As Margaret Rose cultivated her walk with God she was given the power and passion to fully engage in the life of others.

Sister Margaret Rose had many special gifts. Among them were the gifts of humor and spontaneity. Because of her experiences teaching at the Illinois Chinese Cultural Center in Westmont, she would often engage you in a conversation about her teaching there and then, all of a sudden, she would begin singing and talking in Chinese. (Only after the listener was intrigued would she “confess” to making it all up and not having mastered the Chinese language at all.

The reading from Colossians explains the virtues necessary when service is ministry. For four years, Sister Margaret Rose ministered as the Local Coordinator of the Sisters living at Our Lady of Angels Retirement Home. Throughout her ministry she had many opportunities to practice the virtues spoken of in the reading from Colossians: **Compassion:** a deep empathy with others. **Kindness:** a basic, Christian attribute, a fruit of the Spirit; **Humility:** the way she listened, respected, engaged with, and honored others; **Meekness:** she curbed her personality in cases where others needed space to express themselves. **Patience:** she looked for ways to selflessly help others and often found herself waiting **patiently.**

Similar to the question asked by Micah, we could rephrase the question as we read the Gospel from Matthew: "What attitudes would Jesus's ideal followers have?" Traditionally the answer is referred to as the Beatitudes. Blessed means to be fortunate, favored or happy. Sister Margaret Rose was fortunate, favored and happy. She not only possessed these attitudes but demonstrated them in her life. Being poor in spirit she was willing to say, "Lord, I will become what you want me to be."

In 2010, Sister Margaret Rose became a resident at Our Lady of Angels. She did not retire from serving others, but extended her loving care through "Prayer and Presence," encouraging residents, staff and visitors, or sitting quietly in her special place in chapel, being present to the Lord in prayer. She enhanced these gifts by attending "clown school" (adopting the name "Blossom" the clown) having fun performing at parties, picnics, and in classrooms, hoping to help those around her "Blossom with Life." She loved plant and flower arrangements, watching old movies, card playing and pizza parties.

Sister Margaret Rose also had an intensely serious side. She felt very passionate about issues and would share her views freely. Her nephew Scott, (of whom she was very fond), gave her a sign which hung in her room. It said, "Don't mess with Margaret." Her own words tell us this: "I have called upon the Spirit of my life to direct me. I must also continue to 'be attentive to my own heart's demands hidden beneath my defenses.'"

Sister Margaret Rose helped organize "Watchful Waiting," the prayer vigil for OLA Sister residents in the final stages of their earthly journey. She, herself, was called to her eternal reward peacefully, but suddenly, and without warning. Now she waits and watches over each of us from the place she shares with the many she watched, waited and prayed for here.

Margaret Rose demonstrated for us what the Lord requires of us...to do justice, to love kindness and to walk humbly with our God. Her sense of humor and the many gifts and talents which she so generously shared with her family, her students, and her Congregation witnessed the Gospel message with authenticity and simplicity. We remember her, we thank her and we ask her to assist us as we strive to "Blossom" in our life—walking humbly with one another and with our God.

In memory of your life, Margaret Rose, we proclaim, "Amen, Alleluia!"



# Sr. Clare Wand



***“Praise be to You my Lord with  
all Your creatures.”***

*St. Francis-Canticle of the Sun*

Entered Life:  
**1 October 1927**  
Entered Religious Life:  
**7 September 1943**  
Entered Eternal Life:  
**8 November 2020**  
Interment:  
Resurrection Cemetery  
Romeoville, Illinois



**First Reading: Isaiah 40: 28-31**

**Second Reading: Corinthians: 12: 4-11**

**Gospel: Matthew 6: 25-34**

## *Reflection by Sr. Sharon Frederick*

On the morning of November 8, 2020, our Sister Clare Wand closed her eyes and quietly went home to God. She died the way she lived, gracefully and peacefully. Her mission was complete. Her service to others was finished. Now she could enjoy the presence of the God who nourished her heart and gave her life for 95 years, 75 of which were spent as a Joliet Franciscan.

From the very beginning of her life as a Sister of St. Francis, Florence knew that the voice which called her to religious life as an aspirant, was the voice she would follow faithfully and joyfully all her days. Her devotion to St. Clare of Assisi was so strong that even though as a novice she was given the name Sister Clarissa, she later shortened it to Sister Clare.

Although Sister Clare never wanted to teach, she did become a teacher for a short period of time. She worked in the field of education in various capacities as a clerical worker, registrar, copy machine operator and manager of the bookstore at JCA. Trained in the culinary arts, Clare also worked in several parishes cooking, baking, sewing and taking on a myriad of other responsibilities. But it was her service to the Sisters that made her the most joyful. Whether it was setting a table, washing someone's laundry, or mending a Sister's habit, Clare looked upon every task as a blessing from God. Clare never tired of helping others, always working "behind the scenes," always making sure that others had what they needed.

One of the readings that Clare chose, in anticipation of her funeral, was a reading from Isaiah, 40: 28-31.

*“Do you not know?  
Have you not heard?  
..... Those who hope in the Lord will renew  
their strength  
They will soar on wings like eagles;  
They will run and not grow weary,  
They will walk and not grow faint.”*

No wonder Clare chose this reading! She truly lived the words of Isaiah. She asked for strength and God gave it to her. She asked for joy and God saw that she performed her duties with a smile on her face. She asked that she would not grow weary and God let her soar like an eagle.

As the years progressed, many of her family members became afflicted with Huntington Disease, and they relied on Clare to help them through the various stages of their illnesses. Clare was present to each of them, sharing her strength and her joy. In time, Clare also contracted the painful disease and made the decision to move to Our Lady of Angels. Sister Clare totally depended on God who gave her everything she needed for the journey. Her faith was so strong that even when she was told of her Huntington diagnosis, she knew that God would take care of her. She believed in the God who gave her life and gave her the strength to accept the pain and suffering that she bore for many years. Her faithful companion, Sister Thadine, was always present, walking the painful path alongside her friend.

After a while, as her energy grew less, Clare could no longer help her Sisters, but she never complained and looked upon each day with a smile. Even as the pain of the disease increased,

Clare continued to keep her joyful spirit nourished by gazing on the Lord.

The gospel reading that Sister Clare chose is the reading taken from Matthew 5: 25-34. The reading certainly mirrors her whole life:

*.....“do not worry about tomorrow;  
tomorrow will take care of itself.”*

Sister Clare, we thank you for your total abandonment in the service of others. We thank you for reaching out to all those who needed a smile and a helping hand. You taught us how to bring joy to others and to accept whatever comes our way. You taught us how to live. Well done, good and faithful servant.



# Sr. Lauren Wiegman



*“If you find it in your heart to care  
for somebody else, you will have  
succeeded.”* *Maya Angelou*

Entered Life:  
7 July 1935

Entered Religious Life:  
2 September 1952

Entered Eternal Life:  
17 February 2021

Interment:  
Resurrection Cemetery  
Romeoville, Illinois

**First Reading: Isaiah 43: 1-5**

**Second Reading: Romans 12:1-13**

**Gospel: John 13: 12-17**



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## *Reflection by Sr. Margaret Hoffman*

The fact that Sister Lauren Wiegman chose her own readings for her funeral liturgy makes those Scripture passages even more meaningful. The reading from Isaiah 43: 1-5 echoes the words of the hymn “Be Not Afraid” which is used so often in our liturgies for various occasions. Yaweh is quoted as saying to the beloved people of Israel, “Do not be afraid, for I have redeemed you; I have called you by name; you are mine.” Lauren chose to keep her religious name to honor her patronal saint, Saint Lawrence, and one of her brothers, rather than to return to her given name Barbara Ann. The Isaiah passage goes on to mention that God’s presence would be with the people of God despite the trials of passing through seas or rivers or walking through fire because God is with us. God was certainly with Lauren at the death of her brother, Richard, who died during

his military service as a young man, during the various ministries she undertook to those of diverse age levels, and at decisive moments in the lives of those she counseled.

As to her personal qualities, Paul’s letter to the Romans exhorts readers to practice the virtues exemplified so well in Lauren’s life: humility and charity. Paul says, “I want to urge each one among you not to exaggerate his or her real importance.” Paul continues to list the gifts given to those in specific positions, some which Lauren filled such as prophets, administrators, teachers, preachers, and almsgivers, in order to encourage all to do their works of mercy cheerfully. He ends by insisting, “If anyone is in need, you must share with him or her, and you should make hospitality your special care.” Lauren loved the gatherings that the Ohio-Michigan Sisters and Associates had on

Linworth Road in Columbus, and even in the days of Covid when we would Zoom. She said after the meetings, "It seems as if we have had people in the house." Hand in hand with humility and charity then, we can add hospitality.

The Gospel that Lauren chose was John 13: 12-17. This passage describes the Last Supper, but rather than centering on the washing of the feet or the institution of the Eucharist, Lauren chose the excerpt that begins, "When he had washed their feet and put on his clothes again, he went back to the table, and asked the disciples, 'Do you understand what I have done to you? . . . I have given you an example so that you may copy what I have done to you,'" and then Jesus further promises, "Happiness will be yours if you behave accordingly."

Lauren lived the humility, charity, and hospitality of the Scriptures. Her work with black children in Alabama in her youth and her work with immigrant children in her old age, her sense of justice for the Sisters in her care and her sense of justice for those served by the Community Housing Network in Columbus, her willingness to guide teenagers in high school and her readiness to compliment and encourage the younger Congregation members throughout her life, all show the consistency of her spirituality. Lauren was sustained by prayer and daily Eucharist even when seeking out a parish church that would nourish her and which was physically accessible as well took effort on her part.

Lauren Wiegman was a woman of prayer who relied on the Scripture as her guide. Her humility, compassion, and warmth allowed her to accept the difficulties of life with a sense of joyfulness that brought her the admiration and affection of others. No doubt she knew that, as Thomas Campbell, the Scottish poet, says, "To live in the hearts of those we love is not to die."



# Sr. Elaine Murphy



*“God, let light shine in our hearts  
that we might make known the glory  
of God.”*

Entered Life:  
**3 April 1939**  
Entered Religious Life:  
**8 September 1957**  
Entered Eternal Life:  
**20 March 2021**  
Interment:  
Resurrection Cemetery  
Romeoville, Illinois



**First Reading: Wisdom 3:1-9**

**Second Reading: 2 Corinthians 4: 5-7, 14-15**

**Gospel: Matthew 5: 13-16**

## *Reflection by Sr. Jeanne Bessette*

Growing up in the Englewood neighborhood of Chicago, in the embrace of Sacred Heart School and Parish, a young Elaine Murphy felt the call to religious life as a Joliet Franciscan. As Englewood changed before her very eyes – her parents (mostly her mother) continued to live there as the neighborhood deteriorated and became impoverished – those changes helped to shape Elaine’s world view. She very much identified with holding a treasure in earthly vessels, one of the scriptural images she chose for her funeral.

Elaine was the first person I heard use the word “marginalized” to describe people. I never heard her pray without remembering those pushed to the margin by poverty, political unrest, prejudice and disregard for human life. She saw people as God’s treasure even in their very earthly circumstances. It is very likely that

the nine years Elaine spent in Brazil helped to shape that awareness of people who need our prayers but especially our ministry and our generosity of heart. Even before Elaine became a missionary in 1967, she was doing mission work in inner city parishes of Chicago. She was part of a coalition of sisters representing 22 religious congregations who were serving girls and young women whose lives were challenged by poverty, pregnancy and abandonment. Perhaps her missionary heart was formed in the very city where she had grown up and in the 60s reflected realities that sensitized her to serious human need.

That human need helped her to heed the call to join our pioneer sisters in Brazil. Her willingness to be of service led to her availability – *disponibilidade* in Portuguese – for an entirely new mission. She went to Brazil, learned a language she had never heard in Englewood, and put herself at the service of the

gospel as assistant formation director and pastoral minister among the people of Brazil. In her nine years in Brazil, she moved among a number of different ministries, adapting to needs as they arose.

When she returned to the U.S., it was to study theology and formation for religious life. *Disponibilidade* was something she took seriously as she answered the call to leadership in the Congregation, first as Councilor / Area Coordinator and later as President. When St. Francis Academy hired its first male principal, Elaine became the first president of the school and helped steer it through a time of diminishing enrollment as the Congregation considered opportunities to help our school survive. She laid the groundwork for its eventual merger with Joliet Catholic High School, a merger that still ensures Catholic secondary education for Joliet's young women and men.

Elaine was often the salt that enhanced the flavors of what was going on around her. She brought laughter and spirit to social events – parties, gatherings, participation on boards. She was a light as a great proponent of collaboration among women religious through LCWR and among other Franciscans through the Franciscan Federation.

Able to reshape the earthen vessel that was her life, Elaine later served in parish ministry in Iowa before returning to Joliet to take on what would be her longest ministry. She embraced the ministry of hospitality and care in her work at Our Lady of Angels Retirement Home as admissions director for 13 years. She also treasured the opportunity to care for her mother Marge at OLA until the time of her mom's death.

I personally can vouch for the tender side of Elaine. Through a very difficult time in my own life, Elaine stood by me. She didn't just let me cry; she cried with me. She didn't just listen; she spoke of her own challenges but always made room for mine. And I can speak to her tenacity. In the face of others disagreeing with her, Elaine stood alone in making a right decision. She listened to her own heart and to the voice of God, even when that voice led her to her own lonely places.

Her final years were ones of physical challenges and lots of letting go. However she never let go of the faith that pulled her in the first place: a love of God that made her available even to suffering after a long life of generous service.



# Sr. Anna Konrath



**“Rejoice with an  
incredible joy!”**

*1 Peter: 1*

Entered Life:  
**26 July 1932**  
Entered Religious Life:  
**4 September 1950**  
Entered Eternal Life:  
**17 April 2021**  
Interment:  
Resurrection Cemetery  
Romeoville, Illinois



**First Reading: Jeremiah 29: 11-14**

**Second Reading: Revelation 21: 1-7**

**Gospel: John 14: 1-6**

## *Reflection by Sr. Lourdes Boyer*

If you never had a chance to spend quality time with Sister Anna you may have judged her by how you saw her in action or heard her statements. Unfortunately, you never got to know the real Sister Anna. The readings that were chosen for her Mass reflect the true Anna.

Our first reading is from the Book of Jeremiah 29: 11 – 14 is a fitting start since that was the religious name that she lived with for many years, including a number of years after others had changed their names back to their baptismal names. In this book the prophet reminds the people that God has plans for them which include a future and a hope. God invites the people to come and pray, to seek and to find God.

God gave a special invitation to Anna. And she found God! And after finding God, she chose her way to share God with others. She always wanted one of the songs at her funeral to be “I Did it My Way” along with the song, “Edelweiss.”

If you were sick in the hospital and she was able to visit, she would be there. On your birthday you would receive a birthday card from her. She loved to make meals and would offer her services to provide a meal if someone was having a birthday, a celebration, or was sick. Anna was not someone who could talk about God. She found that difficult to do, but she showed her God by doing things for others – sitting with the sick and elderly, caring for the animals of friends who were out of town and especially being there for family and friends



when there was a crisis. She and I were out of town for a bowling tournament when I received news that my mother died. I could never describe how sisterly Anna was with me. To describe her as compassionate doesn't begin to describe her actions and words.

The Book of Revelations 12: 1-7 talks about a new heaven and a new earth...that is - all things would be new. And that the one who thirsts would receive the water of life without cost.

Anna's last few days after her stroke, reflected this new heaven and new earth. Before going into surgery, she reminded me, as her friend and as the second person on her list for power of attorney, of what her choices were. She

especially stated that she did not want to be placed on a respirator that would breathe for her. The surgery was not successful and as she laid in her bed, she exhibited a peacefulness that reflected her awaiting the new heaven and the new earth.

St. John's Gospel 14: 1-6 speaks of the many mansions that await us in heaven. Jesus reminds us that He is the Way, the Truth and the Life. Anna's mansion was ready for her and while we miss her presence among us now, there is a sureness that she will be awaiting our entrance through the heavenly gates and will provide a welcome that only she could give.

# Sr. Nadine Overbeck



*“Trust God in the storms  
of life.”*

Entered Life:  
**3 November 1938**  
Entered Religious Life:  
**8 September 1957**  
Entered Eternal Life:  
**2 May 2021**  
Interment:  
Resurrection Cemetery  
Romeoville, Illinois

**First Reading: Isaiah 43: 1-5**

**Second Reading: Romans 8: 14-17**

**Gospel: Mark 4: 35-41**



*Reflection by Sr. Peggy Quinn*

Nadine chose for her Liturgy the readings that spoke to her heart and the many chapters in her life journey. We can hear and see her faith through the words of scripture that must have challenged her, comforted her and reminded her of the love of God for all his people and that included a personal love for herself.

From Isaiah we hear the great love of God. “Do not fear, for I have redeemed you; I have called you by name: you are mine. When you pass through waters, I will be with you... When you walk through fire, you shall not be burned, nor will flames consume you... Because you are precious in my eyes and honored, and I love you.” Can you imagine how she needed and lived with this passage after the fire that destroyed everything in her apartment. How

the loss of family members from the time she was young called her to this passage. She must have come back to this passage with her illness. “Do not fear, I love you.”

In the letter to the Romans we can hear the continual struggle to start over, to keep going: “For you did not receive a spirit of slavery to fall back into fear, if only we suffer with him so that we may also be glorified with him.” Always come back to hope.

And from Mark we can see the overall faith required to face every day: “Quiet! Be still! The wind ceased and there was great calm. Then he asked them, ‘Why are you terrified? Do you not yet have faith?’ They were filled with great awe and said to one another, ‘Who then is this whom even wind and sea obey?’”

The mystery of life unfolded for Nadine every day, in every situation she or those to whom she ministered found themselves. There were hard things in Nadine's journey but always God seemed to be guiding her in new, deeper ways because of her service, her love for people and faith in God's love for her. One of the songs she wanted played or sung in her liturgy was *Everyday God* by Bernadette Farrell. Every line describing God was followed by "Come be with us." She was a free spirit for the Gospel, trying always to hear the Spirit of God in every situation.

Whether she was in education in Illinois or Ohio, in pastoral work or youth ministry in Columbus or Notre Dame; whether she was in Zanesville, New Hampshire or our business offices or OLA, Nadine lived the Gospel of

welcome, hospitality and creativity. She loved to plan and organize gatherings, plan prayer, and host with special dishes, living the Gospel of service and joy. Over all these joys and the tough things, Nadine and these scripture passages remind us of the greatness of our God! "Who is this whom even the wind and the seas obey?" Her final song was to be *How Great Thou Art*. Love of this great God and love of neighbor was the mission. Battle the storms filled with fear, but trust that we are loved by our God.

Nadine experiences that love most clearly now.  
Amen, Alleluia!



# Sr. Felicity (Joy) Gaffney



***“Sent to proclaim the kingdom of God.”*** Luke 9: 2

Entered Life:  
**6 May 1921**  
Entered Religious Life:  
**10 September 1939**  
Entered Eternal Life:  
**5 June 2021**  
Interment:  
Resurrection Cemetery  
Romeoville, Illinois

**First Reading: Proverbs 3: 1-6**

**Second Reading: 2 Timothy 4: 5-8**

**Gospel: Luke 9: 1-6**



Original artwork © Sr. Kay Francis Berger, OSF

## *Reflection by Sr. Roberta Naegele*

I'm inclined to begin my reflection of Sister Felicity, AKA, Sister Joy, with the Sound of Music song: "How do you catch a wave upon the sand?" Anyone of us who rode her shirt tails as she roamed and rambled from place to place, carefree, ever confident that there was a place for her at any convent in these United States, had no idea how to pin her down, not her sisters, not leadership teams. She was a woman marching to her internal beat whose source was her God.

Her first reading choice from Proverbs explains this: "My child, do not forget my teaching, let your heart keep my principles. Let kindness and loyalty never leave you; write them on the tablet of your heart. In every course you take, have God in mind." Our Felicity was smitten by God!

Her psalm choice reiterates her God connection: Yahweh, my heritage, my cup, you, and you only, hold my lot secure. ...I keep Yahweh before me always, for with Yahweh at my side, nothing can shake me. ...Yahweh will reveal the path of life to me and give me unbounded joy."

Her 2nd reading continues with her deeply aware call from her God: "Be careful always to choose the right course; be brave under trials; make the preaching of the Good News your life's work, in thoroughgoing service. ...Run the race to the finish." And her Gospel choice: Jesus' sending out the 12. "Take nothing for the journey. Whatever house you enter, stay there. ...So, they set out and went from village to village proclaiming the Good News and healing everywhere!"

Sister Felicity was a teacher for over 50 years. She taught at 13 different High Schools teaching primarily English and Spanish courses. In the fifties, she added World history, Ohio history, Civics, and American History. One year, she was also teaching physical education and doing the school paper. She taught from California to Florida, with Colorado, Arizona, Ohio and Illinois in the middle. She taught diverse cultures: Indian, Mexican, rural, inner city, private academy, parish schools for girls, co-ed city wide parish schools, large diocesan high schools, and a GED program. At one of my Jubilee's, Sr. Felicity caught up with my brother, Jerry, whom she had taught in the 50s. They talked together like long lost friends. I suppose not a unique moment for her. Her teaching years ended in 1996 where she worked in a G.E.D. program. She moved to Tampa, Florida, and served as a volunteer to the Rocky Creek Village. She enjoyed this location for 17 years. She was famous for having won 13 gold medals and a trophy in her Senior Olympic swimming division.

Sister Felicity was a Joliet Franciscan for over 81 years. In 1965 through 1969, she left us to test life with the Poor Clare's in Portsmouth, Ohio. She had felt a deep call for contemplative life, but it just didn't suit her spirit. She petitioned to return. After all the paperwork was completed, she was accepted back to us. When Sister Felicity prepared her last wishes, she asked to be cremated after her body was offered for the "welfare and good of humanity, all people!" She stated: "I loved and appreciated God's beautiful, bountiful gifts showered upon me especially LIFE, Family Franciscan

Community—and all of which I've enjoyed and shared to the fullest—all of this plus the wondrous marvels of the Cosmos."

Sister Joy truly roamed and rambled along many roads and paths. She surprised Sr. Mary Rose, showing up during her job interview in Colorado where she thought that no one knew she was there. Sr. Rene Simonelic found her in church, when she was in Broken Arrow, Oklahoma, presenting at a workshop! No wonder we sang: "The Happy Wanderer." Sister Felicity, you have lived the Gospel call and ran the race of life. May you find eternal joy absorbing the eternal presence of our triune God. Alleluia! Alleluia!



# Sr. Dorothy Clare Zuleski



***“Love God and your  
neighbor as yourself”***

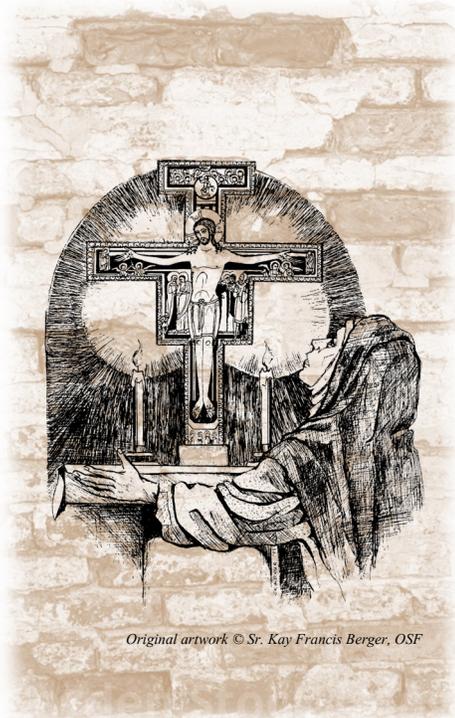
*Mark 12: 30-31*

Entered Life:  
**14 December 1928**  
Entered Religious Life:  
**4 September 1950**  
Entered Eternal Life:  
**14 June 2021**  
Interment:  
Resurrection Cemetery  
Romeoville, Illinois

**First Reading: Jeremiah 31: 31-34**

**Second Reading: Colossians 3: 1-4, 12-17**

**Gospel: Mark 12: 28-34**



Original artwork © Sr. Kay Francis Berger, OSF

*Reflection by Sr. Dolores Zemont*

In his three short years of ministry, Jesus, the master teacher, squeezed his messages into those years, using a variety of approaches. We see recorded in the gospels, the various ways he tried to teach, open minds and hearts, create an awareness of the kingdom. There are parables, miracles, healings, and stories. He responded to people who were hurting, ate with those who were considered sinners, told us how to live, and literally wore himself out when the crowds of people kept coming to him. Ultimately, he gave us an example of how to live and love with abandonment...for others.

Sister Dorothy Clare Zuleski leaves no doubt in our minds that there is a bottom line to living a Christian life. Her message to us is the message of Jesus – it is LOVE; to love God and love neighbor. It is as simple and as complicated and as difficult as that. Jesus said, “There is no other

commandment greater than these.” All three of her readings are a message of life and of love.

The message of love, epitomize the life of a Christian and the life of Sister Dorothy Clare Zuleski – proud Ohioan from the Cleveland area, teacher, librarian, contemplative, lover, mentor, spiritual companion, Franciscan and Clarean to her core and very much in love with her beloved – Jesus, to whom she dedicated her life totally, mind, heart, spirit and soul.

I have known Dorothy Clare since I was a Freshman in high school where she began her teaching ministry, teaching high school English to a very feisty class in the Pilsen area of Chicago. When we found out that she was a new teacher, we often took advantage of her kindness and inexperience, and made her life as a teacher more difficult than it should have been. Actually, we made it quite difficult! That has always bothered me so a few years ago, I

apologized to her on behalf of myself and our entire class. She got upset and said that she had no recollection of us causing any problems, and insisted that we were a model class! And, she very emphatically told me to never bring it up again! She was like a mother who only remembered the good of her children and mirrored the words of Jeremiah that our God declared, "I will forgive their evildoing and remember their sin no more." She lived those words with her students and with all who knew her.

After teaching and library work for many years, she felt a "call within a call" – that is, the call to contemplative living at St. Clare House of Prayer. She lived that commandment to love your neighbor and would always make herself available and welcomed those who needed comfort, or direction, or just someone to be with on the journey.

Even as her health diminished and she was living a pretty confined life, it was often difficult to visit her in an empty bedroom. There was usually someone or several people in the room – an associate or one of our sisters or someone from the OLA staff – housekeepers, CNA's, nurses taking a "spiritual break," as well as many of our sisters and associates to whom she was being present – being the presence of Jesus – loving her neighbor. She had the remarkable gift of listening to others with the ear of her heart; not just listening, but listening with her heart and spirit. It is no wonder then that many, when they were hurting or in need of a compassionate person to be with, someone to listen, sought her out. Like Jesus who couldn't hide from those who needed him, she couldn't hide from those who needed her love, guidance and support and she did so with great tenderness and love. Sister Dorothy Clare got it! She gave herself totally to the people of God until she was unable to do so.

In the readings Sister Dorothy Clare chose, there is a definitive message. Jeremiah reminds us of a loving, forgiving and forgetful God, Paul reminds us that even with living the many virtues he outlines, that we must put on love, which binds the rest together and makes them perfect, and Jesus tell us that there is no greater commandment than to love God and each other. The master teacher, Dorothy Clare, is telling us in these readings of the God to whom she gave her life. A God of love and forgiveness, but also a God who called her and each of us to do the same. Her readings proclaim the message to us and her theme, love God and your neighbor as yourself, leave no doubt about what she believed, what guided her life and what she wanted us to remember about her.

The image chosen of Clare before the San Damiano cross, could be an image of Dorothy Clare who "gazed upon the Lord," sought his face, and looked to him, her beloved, throughout her life, often sitting in his presence in the dark and quiet hours of the night when the world was asleep.

She has left a void in the lives of so many with whom she walked the spiritual journey, who loved her for the gentle, loving, compassionate presence that she was. The teacher in her is still teaching today, giving us Jesus' message of love and forgiveness.

May she be resting in the arms of Jesus.



# Sister Margaret Ann Zimmerman



*“I am going to prepare  
a place for you.”*  
John 14:3

Entered Life:  
**14 March 1921**  
Entered Religious Life:  
**7 September 1943**  
Entered Eternal Life:  
**28 April 2022**  
Interment:  
Resurrection Cemetery  
Romeoville, Illinois

**First Reading: Jeremiah 31: 31-34**

**Second Reading: Colossians 3: 1-4, 12-17**

**Gospel: Mark 12: 28-34**



*Reflection by Sr. Roberta Naegele*

Sister Margaret Ann is a remarkable woman. She has won the hearts and love of many by her gracious humble style of living. I've known her for over 60 years. At St. Mary's, she was my music teacher, our choir directress, and our parish organist. Since then, she has become my friend. As her pedicurist, I've had the joy of sitting at her feet and listening to her stories over these many years.

Sr. Margaret Ann is one of our unsung heroines. Her niece commented that she really did not want to be a musician. In her humorous way Margaret Ann asked: Who would want to view Mass only through the organ mirrors?" Yet for every mission, she

was listed as organist! "The Lord was her strength and her song." Strength was surely needed to do the work of parish liturgist. Imagine the daily masses and liturgical feasts, Vespers, Benedictions, weddings, and funerals. Every weekend, occupied! Add to this, teaching high schoolers. It was a challenge to keep our attention. But I fondly recall chorus performances that successfully collaborated with other High Schools. And as to song: we had been so ingrained in the Latin hymns that we sang them on our outings, even in harmony. All because of her!

As to her other Missions, I find it hard to imagine her tender spirit working seven years with at-risk young women at Marybrook Academy. After 24 years at my home parish, she moved to Joliet to embark on a new

venture at JCA as a medical record's clerk. She received rave reviews for her "dependable, caring and professional" work. Sheila Fry, a JCA teacher said: "Jimmy wore many hats: office secretary, school nurse, musical accompaniment and sweet friend." When Jimmy's vision began to fail, she took the initiative to resign and retire to OLA. No fuss, no muss.

In 2006, Margaret Ann wrote: "I am legally blind. I keep abreast of the news through TV and radio. I read books via library tapes. I listen to music. I exercise by walking daily and I enjoy visiting the residents at OLA." She went from seeing to listening. She adapted her lifestyle to what she could do and what gave her joy and pleasure. For 15 years, she lived independently, accompanied by her sister, neighbor and friend, Sr. Pat Mitchell.

Her last two years of life were "trouble and sorrow." She survived her stroke but lost her independence. She needed earphones to hear. A wheelchair to move about. Someone to feed her. Nursing staff to assist her needs. Yet she was joyful. She could be heard praying to her "loving God." She'd say to me: "Oh, it's you, Roberta. I recognize your voice!" She asked me to wake her up when I'd find her sleeping so we could talk. (Of course, wake her up! What was I thinking!)

St. Paul in his letter to the Romans speaks that "all of creation is awaiting to be set free" — Sr. Margaret Ann lived this trusting way, hoping

that she may as Ps. 90 said: "gain a heart of wisdom. "She developed a hospitable, caring, humble way of living. We students experienced her joy and delight in music and song, so we sang the songs she had taught us. She touched persons with her desire to be sister, friend, aunt, cousin to them. They engaged and smiled and laughed and enjoyed her company.

Thank you, Sr. Margaret Ann, for your graced presence among us. We thank you for listening to God's call, for your faithfulness, for the gift of your very life lived so generously among us.

"Leaping the mountains, bounding the hills, see how our God has come to meet you!"  
Sister Margaret Ann Zimmerman, "Jimmy,"  
Go in Peace! You've waited over 101 years for this reunion. Thank you for your strength and your song. Alleluia! Alleluia!



*Sisters of St. Francis*

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