

# We of Nojoshing

Nojoshing – Indian word for the area where our pioneer members settled in 1849; it means "piece of land stretching into the water."  
The name was changed later to Saint Francis, Wisconsin.



Newsletter of The New Assisi Archives of the  
SISTERS of ST. FRANCIS of ASSISI, 3221 South Lake Drive, St. Francis, WI 53235-3799

## **We celebrate the memory of our beloved Sister Ancille (Patricia) Horgan November 30, 1934 – May 31, 2023**

Sister Ancille was born in Mankato, Minn., to David and Vernie (Sander) Horgan and given the name Patricia at her Baptism. When she was in third grade, the family moved to Stevens Point, Wis. In grade school, Patricia was taught by the School Sisters of Notre Dame and in high school by the Sisters of St. Joseph – Third Order of St. Francis.

In an article about Sister Ancille, she said that she was born into a family that nurtured her physically and spiritually. Her mother was a convert from the Methodist church and her dad exemplified the Catholic lifestyle of their home life. Family prayer and a Catholic school education were foundational. She recalled how, through the teaching and example of the Sisters she had as teachers, she was intrigued by their lifestyle, and this sowed the seed of wanting to follow them in some way.

After high school graduation, Patricia went to St. Teresa College in Winona, Minn., and it was during that time that she became more aware of her call to religious life. Conversations with a very close friend centered around the directions their lives were going as both nurtured a call to something bigger than they had planned for when they initially came to college. When she returned home at the end of that year, she was ready to seek the right convent to enter.

Sister Ancille later wrote that her parents were happy about her decision and helped her in every way. They made a trip to Milwaukee, Wis., and visited two Motherhouses, and she said her choice was made when she entered the door of the Sisters of St. Francis of Assisi convent on South Lake Drive.

Patricia entered our congregation on September 8, 1953, and became a novice on August 11, 1954, at which time she received the name Sister M. Ancille. Her first profession took place on August 12, 1956, and final profession on August 12, 1959.

As a second-year novice, Sister Ancille began her active ministry, teaching grades 5 and 6 at St. Stephen School, which was located next to the Milwaukee airport. During the next four years after profession, she taught upper grades at St. Sebastian and St. Agnes in Milwaukee and a year of English at Assumption High

School in Wisconsin Rapids, Wis. In 1960, she returned as a student to Cardinal Stritch College and graduated with a bachelor of arts degree in English in the spring of 1961. Between 1961 and 1975, she taught in grade schools in Franklin Park, Ill., Eagle River, Wis., and returned to Assumption High School. Beginning in 1975, Sister Ancille transitioned into the role of principal for the next 16 years at elementary schools in Sheboygan Falls, Wisconsin Rapids, Monroe, and Baraboo in Wis., and in Dixon, Ill.

Returning once again to Cardinal Stritch University as a student, she obtained certification in Adult and Family Ministry followed by Clinical Pastoral Education certification at St. Luke Hospital in Milwaukee. From 1993 until 1997, Sister Ancille ministered as a hospital chaplain in Dubuque, Iowa, at the Mercy Health Center and then in Sheboygan Falls at St. Nicholas Hospital. Moving back to Milwaukee, she was a member of the Pastoral Team at St. Francis Convent. Beginning in 1999, she was immersed in other cultures as a volunteer tutor, teaching English as a Second Language at the Milwaukee Achiever Program until her retirement in 2003. In May of 2019, she was part of the move from the old St. Francis Convent to the new convent with nearly 80 other Sisters.

At the time of her golden Jubilee in 2006, Sister Ancille reflected that, from a ministry viewpoint, her first love was the 36 years she spent in Catholic education as a teacher, principal and member of each of the 10 unique parish communities in which she had served. When she moved into chaplaincy work, she found it a privilege to be present to patients and families in times of illness, crisis and death. As an ESL tutor, her immersion in other cultures was an experience like no other before it. Sister Ancille also found time to participate in jail ministry with a group of Sisters from Clare Hall. “All of these experiences were challenging and grace-filled for me. I look back on them with loving gratitude to God and my religious community.”

In 2016, when Sister Ancille celebrated 60 years of religious profession, she wrote: “My call to be a Sister of St. Francis of Assisi has been the greatest blessing of my life. I cherish these 60 years. I’m blessed to be His ‘handmaid’ in a variety of ways and places. *‘Ecce Ancilla Domine’*” (Behold the handmaid of the Lord.)

In retirement, Sister Ancille’s health was frail, but she didn’t let that stop her from being up and about as she was able. It was only shortly before her death that she preferred to be in her bed. Father Tom Suriano anointed Sister Ancille on May 26. On May 31, as plans were in readiness to begin a vigil with Sister Ancille, God called her to enter the fullness of everlasting life. Sister Jane Denning witnessed her peaceful death.

Let us pray with Sister Ancille her favorite Psalm – “*When I was being formed in secret, intricately fashioned from the elements of the earth, your eyes beheld my unformed substance . . . You find me on the journey, and you guide my step . . . you encompass me with love wherever I go.*” (paraphrased from Psalm 139)

†Sister Marie Colette Roy and Sister Marcia Lunz