

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 St. 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 Ann Sister Ann Lawrence (Margie) Kolbeck January 10, 1935 – July 13, 2020

Sister Ann Lawrence, baptized Margaret Anne but known as Margie, was born in Salem, S.D., to Lawrence and Nora (Dunn) Kolbeck. Her family moved to Montebello, Calif., when she was a toddler and, after high school graduation, she entered our congregation on September 8, 1953. When Margie became a novice on August 11, 1954, she received the name Sister Ann Lawrence. As a second-year novice, she was assigned to domestic work at the bishop's residence in Madison, Wis., and professed vows in 1956.

Sister Ann Lawrence began her teaching ministry in special education. She was a primary teacher at Braintree (Mass.) St. Coletta Day School from 1956 to 1958, St. Coletta School, Jefferson, Wis., from 1958 to 1966, and The Joseph P. Kennedy, Jr., School in Palos Park, Ill., from 1966 to 1969. During the next two years, she was a full-time student at Cardinal Stritch University, graduating with a bachelor's degree in 1971.

For the next four years, Sister Ann Lawrence was a secondary teacher at St. Coletta, Jefferson, Wis. In 1975, Sister moved to Hanna Boys Center in Sonoma, Calif., and transitioned to teaching religious education. While engaged in that ministry, she earned a master's degree in religious education from the University of San Francisco. In 1977 she became a primary teacher at St. Benedict School in Montebello, Calif., which was her home parish. She was chosen as the principal in 1985 and also earned a master's degree in education administration in 1990 from Loyola Marymount University. In 1999 she transitioned to parish minister/wedding coordinator in St. Benedict Parish for one year.

Returning to Milwaukee in 2000, Sister Ann Lawrence was an assistant to the Motherhouse administrator until 2003 when she did substitute teaching for one year for the Archdiocese of Milwaukee. In 2004, she started teaching for the Sylvan Learning Center until her retirement in 2011. Sister Ann Lawrence moved to Clare Hall in 2014

and into the new St. Francis Convent in May of 2019.

The Kolbeck family was well represented within the congregation. Sister Ann Lawrence's aunt was our Sister Honorata Kolbeck (†1974); and three cousins – blood Sisters Frances (†1994) and Felicia (†1929) Kolbeck, and Sister Constance Kolbeck (†1994) were also Sisters of St. Francis of Assisi. In the plan of God, the entrance date to the community for both Sisters Frances and Constance was July 13, the date Sister Ann Lawrence died.

Sister Ann Lawrence loved people and believed in treating others as she wanted to be treated. She tried to see the good in people and was always willing to help out. She was good at fussing over others but did not want others to fuss over her. Her enjoyment came from teaching the ‘little ones,’ noting that “new and exciting things happen every day.” She believed that “teaching is about giving children a model for a set of values and good behavior, helping them develop a sense of self-worth that will last throughout their lives.”

In June, due to advancing cancer and the need for more medical supervision, she had moved from Elizabeth Hall to Clare Circle at St. Francis Convent. Although her health was declining, her death did not seem imminent so a vigil was not started. Unexpectedly, Sister Ann Lawrence was called home by God at 8:15 p.m. on July 13.

Sister's brother and sister-in-law, Larry and Sue, and her sister Pat's two daughters, Mary and Karen, arrived in Milwaukee by plane at the same time Sister Ann Lawrence died. They came to St. Francis Convent and were able to sit with her, say their good-byes and pray the rosary before the Medical College of Wisconsin came for her body.

Jesus welcomed the little children and said that the kingdom of heaven belongs to them. (Matt. 19:14) Sister Ann Lawrence welcomed the little children into her classroom and now is welcomed by Jesus into eternal life.

~ Marie Colette Roy, OSF, and Marcia Lunz, OSF