

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 Sister Magdalena (Rose Magdalena) Paul March 20, 1929 – December 2, 2020

Sister Magdalena, baptized Rose, was born in Raleigh, N.D., to Sam and Barbara (Doll) Paul, who were natives of Germany. Rose was the fifth youngest of 16 children. She attended schools in Three Butte, Raleigh, and Bismarck, N.D., before entering our congregation on August 28, 1945. When Rose became a novice in 1946, she received the name Sister Magdalena, which was her middle name.

Sister Magdalena professed vows in 1948. Her first assignment was the altar bread department at our Motherhouse. In 1954 she was transferred to St. Coletta's of Illinois and ministered as a group mother for nine years. Then she made another transition, this time to domestic work at St. Francis de Sales Minor Seminary, Milwaukee. Sister Magdalena devoted three years to the seminary before being transferred in 1966 to Cardinal Cushing Centers in Hanover, Mass.

Sister Magdalena stayed for 42 years at Cardinal Cushing Centers, serving with a generosity of spirit and selflessness that was outstanding. Her first years were spent working in the kitchen during the day and as a group mother for girls at night. Beginning in 1989, she was assigned to just baking in the kitchen and working as needed in food preparation.

Her smile was her sign of welcome and hospitality. Those who traveled through the kitchen were nourished with her love and acceptance as well as her famous cookies. Good conversations were often dished up as well.

A true Franciscan to the core, Sister Magdalena was very close to nature and reveled in every aspect. From caring for the house plants and flower beds around the sisters' house in Hanover, to taking photos of a funnel cloud while on a home visit in North Dakota or watching the sunrise over Lake Michigan from her room in Clare

Circle, her joy in being with God's creation was evident.

God was central to her ministry. She wrote, "Working with special needs people brings one closer to God, and one thanks God each day for the gifts that one has been given. [And in addition] having had the honor and privilege of being a Eucharistic Minister for the elderly was a great opportunity to practice the Franciscan values." Teaching students baking and cooking skills so they could develop their full God-given potential was a highlight for Sister Magdalena.

Her prayer for others extended to those persons she knew, as well as the unknown persons she observed walking or driving past her window on south Lake Drive. She recognized that everyone needs prayer and she did her part to connect them with God.

Sister Magdalena was called to enter the fullness of everlasting life at 10:45 a.m. on Wednesday, December 2, 2020, at St. Luke's South Shore Hospital. She had been admitted to the hospital 12 days earlier after sustaining a lumbar fracture. She contracted COVID during her hospital stay and developed further complications. When her physical condition declined, her doctor and the nursing staff held her hand and offered her comfort. In keeping with her wishes, she was kept comfortable and died peacefully.

In 2018, when Sister Magdalena celebrated her 70th Jubilee of Profession, she reflected:

"A wonderful, wonderful life.

A beautiful life.

A life that brought me close to God.

There isn't a better life to live!"

Now Sister Magdalena enjoys eternal life.

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