

# 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.



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SISTERS of ST. FRANCIS of ASSISI, 3221 South Lake Drive, St. Francis, WI 53235-3799

## **We Celebrate the memory of our beloved Sister Martha (Yuo Yuin Yi) Yuo December 23, 1924 – December 30, 2020**

Sister Martha was born in Honan, China, the daughter of Yuo Yuen Ching and Zeng Kwai Mai. Her father was a carpenter and her mother was a homemaker. Sr. Martha mentioned in a 1971 document that she did not know where her brothers and sisters were and there are no other details available about her siblings.

She attended Shan Tao elementary school, graduating in 1939, and Seat of Wisdom High School, graduating in 1942. Her entrance date after high school into the Sisters of the Holy Infant in Honan is not recorded in the documents we have. From verbal accounts, we know that the leadership of the Holy Infant Sisters sent Sisters Martha and Helen, two of the younger sisters, if not the youngest, out of China to Hong Kong for safety during the Civil War. It was hoped that if the Sisters of the Holy Infant didn't survive in China, these two sisters would keep the congregation alive somewhere else.

The two sisters walked by day and hid in the rice paddies or bushes at night. They survived on food given to them from people they met along the way.

Once in Hong Kong, the sisters found lodging with a community of sisters. Sister Martha sewed for the sisters and Sister Helen helped in other ways to support themselves. Guided by advice from their host sisters, the two Holy Infant sisters went to Indonesia and found another group of sisters to live with there. Again, they worked to support themselves. It was here that they met a 19-year-old woman who was interested in religious life, and she joined up with Sisters Martha and Helen. She would become known as Sister Maria Lee in religious life.

The host sisters in Indonesia had sisters in the southern part of Taiwan and suggested that the Holy Infant Sisters go to live with them. From there they moved to Taichung in central Taiwan. Somewhere in the course of their travels, the sisters reunited with Sister Lucy, also a Sister of the Holy Infant. In Taichung, Sister Lucy received money from the diocese that had been sent by a German organization. With this money she bought land in Panchaio, a suburb of Taipei. Here the sisters built Liteh Kindergarten and a convent.

A small group of our sisters, who had moved to Taiwan in the late 1960s to minister to the Chinese people displaced from mainland China, met the Sisters of the Holy Infant and formed a relationship. A discussion of transfer to the Sisters of St. Francis of Assisi began and was subsequently facilitated by Sister Leandra Eckelkamp (†1991).

On February 11, 1972, Sisters Martha Yuo, Maria Lee and Lucy Chang professed vows as Sisters of St. Francis of Assisi. Sister Helen had developed mental illness due to trauma and loss and lived in a care facility until her death.

Until 1983, when Sister Martha became principal of the kindergarten, she taught typewriting wherever she lived in Taiwan. This was using a Chinese typewriter with Chinese characters, a much more complicated machine and much larger than a standard English alphabet typewriter.

Parents, faculty, and students loved Sister Martha. She was gracious, kind, generous and very hard working. The kindergarten was highly recognized as a qualified school and enrollment at times was over 500 students. They were well disciplined, expected to pay attention, but treated kindly. Morning exercises took place on the blacktopped playground on which rows of markers were painted, and each child was assigned a place to stand. During the day the sound of children's voices doing their recitations and responses to the teachers filled the air. Sister Martha served as principal until her retirement in 2008. As her health declined in these last years, she continued to be highly respected for all she had contributed to the kindergarten even though she wasn't able to actively administer.

Sister Martha was hospitalized in Far Eastern Hospital in Panchaio for almost two months before her death. Priests who knew her came to pray with her and Sister Maria Lee visited her daily. On December 30, God called her home. Sister Martha died peacefully in her sleep of natural causes.

A funeral liturgy was held for Sister Martha on January 9, 2021, at the Chinese Martyrs Sanctuary. The presider was Fr. Willy Ollevier, pastor, who knew Sister Martha well. Two friends of the sisters attended – Clare Lin and Charity Yang, and Charity wrote the following account:

“The service was very dignified. Father Willy gave a short history of OSF Sisters and the life of Sr. Martha. He also referred to the Bible story about Martha and Mary. Mass was followed by a film showing the life of Sr. Martha. In the tradition of a Chinese family service, Sr. Maria led the teachers of the kindergarten to pay respects with incense, flowers and fruit at the altar. After the family service, those attending were invited to go up to pay respects one by one, and that's the time when I went up to pay my respects. Lastly, we were invited to view Sr. Martha for the last time and place roses in the casket. It took about 20 minutes to drive to the crematorium, where we had lunch and stayed for about 90 minutes, before we headed out to the Catholic cemetery. Everything went well and I'm sure Sr. Martha was happy for all the arrangements.”

At the cemetery, Sister Martha's ashes were placed in an urn and sealed in a wall. A Memorial Mass will be celebrated at St. Francis Convent on February 24, 2021.

Sister Martha loved beauty and was gifted with artistic talent. Now she can enjoy God's beauty in its fullness.

“God the Lord has spoken and summoned the earth, from the rising of the sun to its setting. From Zion, perfect in beauty, God shines forth.” Ps 50: 1-2

*Marcia Lunz, OSF*