

# 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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## **We celebrate the memory of our beloved Sister Veronica Marie (Rose) Rueth November 22, 1940 – May 10, 2022**

Sister Veronica Marie was born to Clarence and Veronica (Vogel) Rueth in Jefferson, Wis., and given the name Rose at her Baptism at St. Lawrence Church. She was the second oldest of five daughters.

Growing up on the family farm, the homestead of her paternal grandparents, she took her turn in helping with the chores. Sister Veronica Marie said that they worked hard but also had a fun and happy time together. They were a singing family and often tried harmonizing to a song they had heard on the radio. Her father would say in hard times, “Don’t cry. Let’s all sing.”

As had their parents, Rose and her sisters went to the parish elementary school at St. Lawrence, which was a two-room school house with four grades in each room. Here she got to know our Sisters who taught there, and they, along with the faith-filled lives of her parents, sowed the seed of a religious vocation. Sister Veronica Marie said that as long as she could remember, she wanted to be a Sister.

Rose entered the Aspirancy at St. Francis Convent on September 3, 1954, and attended high school at St. Mary’s Academy. As a Postulant she finished her senior year and graduated in May of 1958. On August 11, 1958, she became a Novice and was given the name Sister Veronica Marie in honor of her mother.

Sister Veronica Marie professed temporary vows on August 12, 1960, and during the next three years, she worked in the host department at our Motherhouse. An invitation from Sister Imeldis (Ruth) Lawler (†2002), a member of the Council, changed the course of her ministry. Sister Veronica Marie had always hoped to work with children, and she accepted the challenge to be a group mother at St. Aemilian Home in Milwaukee, which in 1963 had evolved into a residential treatment center for emotionally disturbed boys. It was an adjustment to work with boys, since she had grown up without brothers; but Sister Veronica Marie said, “it was a maturing process for me and hopefully I was able to give them some of the structure and care they needed.”

After profession of final vows in August of 1965, Sister Veronica Marie was transferred to the Lt. Joseph P. Kennedy, Jr., School in Palos Park, Ill., where she served as a group mother for seven years. She recalls this time as one of building relationships with the boys at the school, Sisters, staff, parents and friends. Working together to help the boys grow to their fullest potential was paramount for all involved.

Sister Veronica Marie became a full-time student at Cardinal Stritch College, now University, in 1972 and graduated in 1974, with a Bachelor of Arts degree in Educational Psychology. She then returned to St. Aemilian Home as a unit manager. After a stroke and a month of physical therapy in 1990, Sister Veronica Marie returned to St. Aemilian Home and worked in environmental services. She also assisted in medical services, entering data on the computer.

After 25 years of service to St. Aemilian Home, Sister Veronica Marie resigned and moved to Clare Hall. In May 2000, she received the C.A.R.E. Award (Clients Are Really Everything) from St. Aemilian-Lakeside. The nomination statement for this award summarizes Sister Veronica Marie's life-long impact wherever she was.

*Sr. Veronica was nominated for the May CARE Award in recognition of her commitment and dedication to the agency. In the different positions she has held over the years, Sr. Veronica always gives 110%. There's no job she won't tackle and there's no task too small. She approaches job assignments with patience, energy and enthusiasm and takes pride in her work. She goes above and beyond any job description and truly epitomizes the words 'labor of love.' Sr. Veronica spends much of her own time making floral arrangements to provide a bright and cheery atmosphere and specializes in plant care and offers TLC to those of us born without the proverbial 'green thumb.' She goes out of her way to help others – staff, clients, families or visitors in the hallway looking for assistance. We're all very fortunate to work with such a kind and caring friend and co-worker!*

At Clare Hall Sister Veronica Marie ministered in a variety of ways. The hospitality and kindness that she extended to all visitors are remembered very vividly. She spoke kindly of others and was a great storyteller. In 2011, she formally retired but continued to volunteer in a number of ways.

In May of 2019, Sister Veronica Marie moved to Elizabeth Hall in the new St. Francis Convent and lived there until November when she moved to Clare Circle in the new convent due to increasing health needs. The last few months of her life were very challenging for her. On May 9, 2022, she was anointed by Fr. Robert Wotypka, OFM, Cap. On May 10, 2022, at 12:27 p.m. God called Sister Veronica Marie home. Sisters Ruth Mary Costello, Linda Greenwood and nurse Diane Sexton witnessed her peaceful death at St. Francis Convent.

A constant theme in Sister Veronica Marie's life was gratitude. Her reflections at the time of her golden and diamond jubilee celebrations in 2010 and 2020 show this:

**2010 ~ Reflection on 50<sup>th</sup> Jubilee of Profession**

As I reflect upon my life as a woman religious, I am deeply grateful for my vocation, my ministries, my entire life. A one-word summary of these past 50 years is gratitude, gratitude, gratitude, first of all to God, my congregation, and my sisters.

**2020 ~ Reflection on 60<sup>th</sup> Jubilee of Profession**

In reflecting on my 60 years of religious life, the main thought that overshadows all others is gratitude. Thanksgiving for my parents, four sisters, relatives, friends, co-workers, community, all my experiences and all the blessings and graces that came with it. I am truly grateful for all that was and look forward to all that is to come.

Among her papers was one that was hand written and titled "Everything is gift." The lined, three-hole punched paper has three columns filled with 88 gifts such as "gift of life, gift of work, gift of community, etc., and ends at the bottom with "gift of Blessings."

We commend our Sister, Sister Veronica Marie, into the hands of God with gratitude for her life among us.

"I, ... put my trust in God's love for ever and ever. I mean to thank you constantly for doing what you did, and put my hope in your name, that is so full of kindness, in the presence of those who love you." (Psalm 52: 8-9 *The Jerusalem Bible*)

~ † Marie Coletta Roy, OSF and Marcia Lunz, OSF