Remembering Our Sisters

When our community gathers to celebrate the life and ministry of a dear sister who has died, we know that, in Heaven, she cherishes our love, prayers and—when possible—presence at her visitation, Vigil, and Funeral Mass.

Six sisters have died since the last public celebration of a Mass of Christian Burial in St. Joseph Chapel in early March, before the Archdiocese of Milwaukee issued its directive on celebrating the Eucharist during the COVID-19 pandemic. We look forward to being able to celebrate their lives soon. In the meantime, as we abide by social distancing guidelines, we will share our deceased sisters’ obituaries through occasional emails.

May we continue to draw strength from their holy lives as we ask for their prayers of intercession and protection.

Sister Annelda Holtkamp, who lived her religious vocation as a homemaker, died on April 19, 2020, at Our Lady of the Angels Convent, in Greenfield, Wisconsin. Sister was 102 years old.

Sister Annelda was born on October 27, 1917, in St. Paul, Iowa. She was received into the School Sisters of St. Francis on June 13, 1943; made her first profession of vows in 1945; and made final (perpetual) vows in 1951.

Sister Annelda is survived by her sister Renelda Pieper of Houghton, Iowa; and the School Sisters of St. Francis Community, with whom she shared her life for 77 years.


In her retirement, Sister served in the ministry of prayer and presence at St. Joseph Convent, Campbellsport (2005-2011), and at Our Lady of the Angels Convent, Greenfield, from 2011 until the time of her death.

A Funeral Liturgy was held on April 24, 2020, at St. Joseph Chapel, Milwaukee. Interment was at Mount Olivet Cemetery in Milwaukee.

**Sister Clare Maureen Connolly**, who lived her religious vocation in education and parish ministry for 60 years, died on April 15, 2020, in Omaha, Nebraska. Sister was 82.

Sister Clare Maureen was born in Ireland on September 16, 1937. She joined the Sisters of the Poor Child Jesus in 1955, with whom she taught elementary and high school students. In 1975 she transferred to the School Sisters of St. Francis and made her final (perpetual) vows with our community in 1976.

Sister Clare Marie is survived by two brothers: John (Karen) Connolly of Fairfield, Connecticut, and Jim of Pacifica, California; sister Maureen (Terry) of Venice, Florida; many nieces and nephews, and the School Sisters of St. Francis Community with whom she shared her life for 45 years.


Sister donated her body to the Anatomical Board of Nebraska. A memorial service will be held at a later date.

**Sister Marie June Skender (Maristeva)**, who lived her religious vocation as an educator, musician and parish minister for 65 years, died on April 7, 2020, at Our Lady of the Angels Convent in Greenfield, Wisconsin. Sister was 83 years old.

Sister Marie June was born on November 16, 1936, in Milwaukee. She was received into the School Sisters of St. Francis on June 13, 1953, made her first profession of vows in 1955, and final (perpetual) vows in 1961. Sister Marie June is survived by a brother, Steven Skender of Port Charlotte, Florida; a sister, Shirley Williams of West Allis;
nieces, nephews and cousins; and the School Sisters of St. Francis Community, with whom she shared her life for 67 years.


In the Archdiocese of Milwaukee, Sister served as director of pastoral care at St. Joseph Convent, Campbellsport (1990-1996); served as secretary at Immaculate Heart of Mary Parish in West Allis Wisconsin (1998-1999) where she also served in pastoral care (2005-2012); served as pastoral minister at Clement Manor in Greenfield (1999-2001), was choral director at West Allis Center In West Allis (2001-2002), and assisted with Christian formation at St. Augustine Parish in West Allis (2002-2005). In the Diocese of St. Paul/Minneapolis, sister served as a teacher/organist at St. Walburga School in Fletcher (1961-1963).

In her retirement, Sister served in the ministry of prayer and presence at Sacred Heart in Milwaukee (2015-2016), and at Our Lady of the Angels Convent in Greenfield from 2016 until the time of her death.

A Funeral Liturgy was held on April 16, 2020, at St. Joseph Convent Chapel in Milwaukee, Wisconsin. Interment was at Mt. Olivet Cemetery, Milwaukee.

**Sister Marylyn Welter (Leona Marie)**, who lived her religious vocation as an educator and pastoral Associate for 67 years, died on April 4, 2020, at Sacred Heart in Milwaukee. Sister was 85.

Sister Marylyn was born on September 12, 1934, in Chicago. She was received into the School Sisters of St. Francis on June 13, 1951, made her first profession of vows in 1953, and final (perpetual) vows in 1959.

Sister Marylyn is survived by nieces and nephews, and the School Sisters of St. Francis Community, with whom she shared her life for 69 years.


In her retirement, Sister served in the ministry of prayer and presence at Sacred Heart in Milwaukee from 2016 until the time of her death. Sister chose to have a green burial, which was held on April 7, 2020, at the Sisters Cemetery in Campbellsport. A Memorial Mass will be celebrated at a later date.

Sister Ellinda Leichtfeld, who lived her religious vocation in education and health care for 73 years, died on March 28, 2020, at Maria Linden Apartments in Milwaukee. Sister was 95.

Sister Ellinda was born on June 18, 1924, in Chicago. She was received into the School Sisters of St. Francis on June 13, 1945, made her first profession of vows in 1947; and final (perpetual) vows in 1953.

Sister Ellinda is survived by her great niece, Karen Carbone, several cousins, and the School Sisters of St. Francis Community with whom she shared her life for 75 years.

In the Archdiocese of Milwaukee, Sister served in Milwaukee as principal at Our Lady of Sorrows School (1958-1962), and as Administrator at St. Mary Hill Hospital (1964-1976), where she also served as Administrative Executive Director (1976-1984), and as President/CEO (1984-1989). In the Diocese of Rockford, Sister taught at St. Joseph School in Aurora (1948-1953).

Upon her retirement, Sister volunteered her services at Alfons Gallery in Milwaukee (1992-2001), served as a volunteer for students with special needs at Alverno College (2001-2012), and served in the ministry of prayer and presence at Maria Linden Apartments in Milwaukee from 2014 until the time of her death.

A Funeral Liturgy was held on April 2, 2020, at St. Joseph Chapel, Milwaukee. Interment was at Mount Olivet Cemetery, Milwaukee.

_Sister Marion Verhaalen (Vernon),_ who lived her religious vocation as a musician, piano instructor, and composer, died on March 16, 2020, at Sacred Heart, Milwaukee. Sister was 89.

Sister Marion was born in Milwaukee on December 9, 1930. She was received into the School Sisters of St. Francis on June 13, 1950; made her first profession of vows in 1952; and final (perpetual) vows in 1958.

Sister Marion is survived by a sister-in-law, Patricia Rader of Orange City, Florida; nieces, nephews and friends; and the School Sisters of St. Francis Community with whom she shared her life for 70 years.


In her retirement, Sister served in the ministry of prayer and presence at Sacred Heart, Milwaukee (2017-2019) and at Our Lady of the Angels Convent in Greenfield from 2019 until the time of her death.

A Funeral Liturgy was held on March 20, 2020, at St. Joseph Chapel in Milwaukee, followed by burial at Mt. Olivet Cemetery in Milwaukee.