

Sister M. Magdalita Morvay, O.S.F.

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Born: September 10, 1920
Parents: Frank and Stella (Mateja) Morvay
Entered from: Sacred Heart Huron Street, Chicago, IL
Postulancy: September 8, 1936
Novitiate: August 12, 1937
Profession: August 12, 1939
Died: Tuesday, December 28, 1999 at Our Lady of Angels Retirement Home, Joliet, IL at 5:20 a.m.

Ministry:

1939 - 1950 St. John the Baptist, Joliet, IL, Grades 2, 5, 6, 7
1950 - 1951 St. Ann's, Lansing, IL, Grade 7
1951 - 1952 Sacred Heart, Hubbard Woods, IL, Grade 7
1952 - 1954 Immaculate Conception, Toledo, OH, Grade 8
1954 - 1955 Sacred Heart, Hubbard Woods, IL, Grade 7
1955 - 1959 St. Francis Academy, Joliet, IL, Latin, General Math, Communication Arts
1959 - 1962 St. Francis de Sales High School, Chicago, IL, Principal
1962 - 1964 St. Francis Convent, Joliet, IL, Congregation School Supervisor
1964 - 1987 St. Thomas Aquinas High School, Principal, High School Supervisor, Assistant Principal, Director of Alumni, Guidance Counselor
1987 - 1992 St. Thomas Aquinas High School Residence, Educational Research, Consultation, Program development for entry level teachers
1992 - 1997 St. Joseph Care Center, Louisville, OH, Pastoral Minister
1997 - 1999 St. Louis High School, Louisville, OH, Special Projects
1999 - Our Lady of Angels Retirement Home, Joliet

Wake: Our Lady of Angels Retirement Home, Joliet, IL, Thursday, December 30, 1999 from 2-7 p.m. with a prayer service at 4:30 p.m.

Mass of Christian Burial: Our Lady of Angels Retirement Home, Joliet, IL, Thursday, December 30, 1999 at 7:00 p.m.

Burial: Friday, December 31, 1999 leaving Our Lady of Angels at 9:00 a.m. to Resurrection Cemetery, Romeoville, IL Section 8, Lot 336, Grave 11

Survived by: her brothers Raymond Morvay of Cary, IL, and Frank (Gloria) Morvay of Niles, IL, her sister Geraldine (James) Sellers of Gila Bend, AZ, her cousin Sister Carolita Dilla, OSF and many nieces and nephews

*For those who have been faithful, O Lord,
life is not ended, but merely changed.*

Sister Magdalita Morvay was born in Chicago, Illinois on September 10, 1920 to Frank and Stella (Mateja) Morvay. On September 20, she was baptized Lillian Dorothy at Sacred Heart Church on Huron Street in Chicago, where with her brothers Ray and Frank and her sisters Cel and Gerry, she attended school.

On September 8, 1936, Lillian was received as a postulant with the Franciscan sisters in Joliet, Illinois. On August 12, 1937, Lillian became a novice and was given the name Sister Mary Magdalita, in honor of St. Mary Magdalene who first announced to the apostles the good news of Jesus' resurrection. She cherished the joy of being a Sister and sought to have her life bring good news to others.

Following first profession of vows on August 12, 1939, Sister Magdalita began her ministry of education as a second grade teacher at St. John the Baptist School in Joliet, Illinois, where she remained for 11 years. One of her former students from St. John's wrote to Sister Magdalita last month saying: "I want to let you know the great impact your life has had on mine! You were my 2nd and 7th grade teacher, and Maggie, those were two of the best years of my young life! Aside from the regular academics, you instilled in me (& hopefully the rest of the class), a sense of purpose in life, along with a positive and happy attitude to help guide me into adulthood! My life has been much richer, my attitude more positive, my family more important, and my faith in Jesus - much dearer because of you!" Sister Magdalita was an educator in various elementary schools in Illinois and Ohio, as well as St. Francis Academy in Joliet and St. Francis de Sales High School in Chicago. With the wealth of this experience, she served as congregational school supervisor from 1962 to 1964.

In 1964, Sister Magdalita was asked to serve as founding principal of the girls' division of the new St. Thomas Aquinas High School in Louisville, Ohio. She remained there, serving in various capacities until June 1987. Gary Conny, St. Thomas Aquinas Alumni Association President, gave an apt summary of Sister Magdalita's impact on Aquinas when he wrote in the March 1999 Alumni News: "Can we forget Sister Magdalita? She was here from the very beginning. Sister's loving attention to details, to the students, to the faculty, created a sense of excellence that would not allow any of us to accept second best. Sr. Magdalita gave us the best years of her life and in so doing, forever created a standard at Aquinas that continues to mark the school as one of the country's best."

In 1987, Sister Magdalita and Sister Carole von Buelow received a grant to do research regarding mentoring of beginning teachers. Together they developed a program which they piloted in various schools. In 1992, Sister Magdalita served as a pastoral minister at St. Joseph Hospice, later St. Joseph Care Center, in Louisville, Ohio.

On October 15, 1999, Sister Magdalita came to Our Lady of Angels. Her positive attitude was an inspiration to those around her. Wanting to be prepared and have things in order, Magdalita asked Carole to help her plan the funeral liturgy as they spent time together over the Christmas holidays. She chose the readings, the music and prepared a list of names of those to be asked to do special parts in the liturgy. In the early morning of Tuesday, December 28, at 5:20 a.m., surrounded by the prayers and songs of the Sisters, including "Angels We Have Heard on High," Magdalita peacefully left this earth to be forever with her God.

Sister Magdalita we thank you for your love of life and your service as an inspirational teacher. May you continue to pray for your former students and friends, for your family and your Franciscan Sisters as you enjoy the company of Jesus, your Rabboni and teacher, forever. Amen. Alleluia.

