

# Alleluia!

*Sister M. Annarita Phillips, OSF*



Sister Annarita Phillips was born in Chicago, Illinois on May 25, 1916 to Louis and Mary Kita Phillips. Baptized Anastasia Theresa at St. Stanislaus Kostka Church in Chicago, she was one of nine children. Her sisters, Sophie and Marie and her brothers, Nicholas, William, Adam, John, Louis and Alexander preceded her in death.

After graduating from St. Clement Grade School in Chicago, Anastasia came to Joliet where she attended and graduated from St. Francis Academy. She later completed her formal education with a B.A. and an M.A. in Franciscan Theology from the College of St. Francis and a Master of Education from DePaul University, Chicago.

On September 8, 1934, Anastasia entered the postulancy. She began her novitiate on August 12, 1935 and received the name Sister M. Annarita. After first profession of vows, Sister Annarita began her 64 years of ministry. From 1937 until 1980, she was involved in elementary education as teacher, principal, librarian and as Consultant for Principals and Teachers for the Chicago Catholic School Board. She spent 13 years teaching grades 2 through 6 at St. Mary Magdalene in Columbus, Ohio.

Sister Annarita spent 27 of her years in education in Chicago. Her special love was working in the inner city with Spanish-speaking people and the economically poor. She served St. Boniface School and Parish for 17 of those years. One of her teachers at St. Boniface once wrote that her "dynamic personality and unique understanding of her pupils and staff make her a necessary part of St. Boniface. We need her both professionally and spiritually."

In 1980 Sister Annarita, with her good friends and assistants, Sisters Martin and Virginette, opened the Senior Center at St. Pascal's in Chicago. Sister Annarita wrote about its beginnings in our Congregation's book of stories called 'A Patchwork Quilt,' "I first noticed the three elderly gentlemen seated across from me in the Public Library where, one day in the late 1970's, I had come to do some research. They seemed so bored, so completely aimless, as they listlessly flipped through magazines and newspapers. So I sauntered over to them, introduced myself to them and soon we were engaged in a soft, but animated conversation whose chief theme seemed to be, 'Nothing to do; nowhere to go; no interests in life.' This chance encounter set my steps upon a path that I, too, wanted to pursue: something new in my life. That day an idea was born: How about 'growing old gracefully' – and usefully – with the elderly? At the next parish council

meeting, I broached the subject to the group. Thus was born the present St. Pascal's Senior Center which presently occupies the first floor of the convent."

Sister Annarita spent 18 years working with seniors, giving them a place to spend time with others, working together on projects, nourishing their minds, bodies and spirits, supporting one another in joyous and in sad times. She wrote, "My greatest sense of satisfaction and fulfillment comes when I hear our Seniors expressing their joy and satisfaction at finding something worthwhile to do and to look forward to."

In 1998, Sister Annarita retired from this ministry with seniors to help care for her sister, Marie. She moved into the family home with Marie and with her good friends, Sisters Margaret Alice and Rose who had lived with and ministered to Marie for years. When Marie died in July of 2000, Sister Annarita decided to move to Our Lady of Angels in Joliet. On December 7, 2000, the day before she moved to OLA, Sister Annarita was officially diagnosed with cancer.

These last five months were a time of prayer, suffering and preparing for death. Through it all, though, Sister Annarita never lost her sense of humor or her love of life. She enjoyed receiving visitors and her eyes would light up even when she couldn't communicate in other ways. Then, very quietly, early in the morning of May 12<sup>th</sup>, just 13 days before her 85<sup>th</sup> birthday, surrounded by her niece, Mary Ann, and her Franciscan sisters, Sister Annarita went home to her God.

Sister Annarita, you once wrote, that your concept of community living was of a family of people who "give and do not count the cost."...people "who are not ashamed to show others they care." We thank you for being an example of this way of living to all of us through the years. As you begin your eternity with the God you served so faithfully throughout your life, remember us your family, your friends, your Franciscan sisters. Amen! Alleluia!

**Sister M. Annarita Phillips, O.S.F.**  
**25 May 1916 - 12 May 2001**

*Born:* May 25, 1916, Chicago, Illinois 812  
*Parents:* Louis and Mary (Kita) Phillips  
*Entered From:* St. Clement, Chicago, Illinois  
*Postulancy:* September 8, 1934  
*Novitiate:* August 12, 1935  
*Profession:* August 12, 1937  
*Entered New Life:* Saturday, May 12, 2001, at Our Lady of Angels at 12:25 a.m.

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**Ministry History**

1937 - 1938 Teacher, Grade 2; St. Stephen, Johnstown, PA  
1938 - 1951 Grades 2,3,4,5 & 6; St. Mary Magdalene, Columbus, OH  
1951 - 1953 Grade 5; St. John the Baptist, Joliet, IL  
1953 - 1955 Grade 6 & 7; Our Lady of Guadalupe, Chicago, IL  
1955 - 1957 Grade 6; St. Francis of Assisi, Chicago, IL  
1957 - 1963 Grades 6 & 7; St. Boniface, Chicago, IL  
1963 - 1970 Grade 8 and Principal; St. Boniface, Chicago, IL  
1970 - 1974 Principal; St. Boniface, Chicago, IL  
1974 - 1978 Diocesan Principal/Teacher Consultant; Archdiocese of Chicago, IL  
1978 - 1980 Librarian; St. Benedict, Chicago, IL  
1980 - 1998 Director of St. Pascal Senior Center; St. Pascal Parish, Chicago, IL  
1998 - 2000 Family Ministry; Chicago, IL  
Dec. 2000 - Retired; Our Lady of Angels Retirement Home, Joliet, IL

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*Wake:* Tuesday, May 15, 2001, 2 - 7:00 p.m., Our Lady of Angels, Joliet, IL  
*Wake Service:* Tuesday, May 15, 2001, 4:30 p.m., Our Lady of Angels, Joliet, IL  
*Mass of Christian Burial:* Tuesday, May 15, 2001, 7:00 p.m., Our Lady of Angels, Joliet, IL  
*Burial:* Wednesday, May 16, 2001; leaving Our Lady of Angels at 9:00 a.m.  
to Resurrection Cemetery, Romeoville, IL  
*Interment* S8 - L334 - G5

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*Survived by:* Sister-in-law, Anna Mae (John) Phillips and nieces and nephews.

**Rest in Peace, Sister M. Annarita**