

Alleluia!

Sister M. Marina Vaniscak, O.S.F.



Sister Marina Vaniscak was born in Johnstown, Pennsylvania on March 9, 1919 to Andrew and Catherine Motyka Vaniscak. She was baptized Emilia Josephine at St. Stephen Church in Johnstown. Emilia was the second youngest of six children. Her two brothers, Andrew and Joseph, and two of her sisters, Katherine and Anna, preceded her in death. Anna was our own Sister Gordian who died in 1964 at the age of 49. Her sister, Mary, survives. Sister Marina always used to say that she was a tomboy and her dad's favorite. She was with her father when he died in 1940, which she looked upon as a special gift.

Emilia chose to come to St. Francis Preparatory in Joliet, and she graduated from St. Francis Academy. In 1997, she wrote, "From my childhood I wanted to be a Sister. Since we were close neighbors with the Mercy Sisters, naturally I thought in terms of entering their community. The fact that they were mainly a nursing order bothered me a bit, but I never questioned God's will for me. Then my beautiful Sister Gordian upset my apple cart and Sister Euolgia helped by stressing the need for good and great teachers." So, on September 8, 1936, Emilia became a Postulant. Upon entering the Novitiate on August 12, 1937, she received the name Sister Mary Marina. Throughout her formation years, she was always described as kind, respectful, industrious and helpful to others.

Sister Marina received a Bachelor of Arts degree from the College of St. Francis and attended the Seraphic Institute of Theology, St. John College in Cleveland, Ohio and various education workshops throughout her life.

After professing vows on August 12, 1939, Sister Marina began her 55 years in education. She taught grades 3 through 7 at various parish schools in Illinois, Ohio and Pennsylvania. At many of these missions, she was also organist. This includes six years at St. Ludmilla in Chicago and eight years at her home parish of St. Stephen in Johnstown. Sister Marina spent a total of 25 years at St. Edward in Ashland, Ohio, where at various times, she taught Grades 5 or 6, was librarian, remedial education teacher, teacher aide, substitute teacher and religious education teacher.

In 1995, Sister Marina moved to the Motherhouse and tutored in the St. Francis Learning Center. In 1996, she wrote, "I've learned that tutoring takes more preparation than for class work. However, I enjoy working with the children. They keep me alive!"

Marina retired to Our Lady of Angels Retirement Home in 1997. This last year Marina began experiencing difficulty in swallowing. After returning from a short stay in the hospital, Marina found eating more and more difficult. She became very weak and early on the morning of January 23, 2002, Sister Marina went quietly and peacefully home to her God.

Sister Marina had a deep love for our Congregation and she once wrote that her concept of community could be summed up with the saying, "Do unto others as if the other was you." And she often told people she loved them. She had a great devotion to Our Lady and said many "golden" Hail Mary's. She once said of traveling, especially by air, that "this is when I catch up on all the Hail Mary's that I skipped."

In the 1990 Commemorative Booklet, Marina wrote an essay entitled "A Gift in Reverse." The first paragraph reads: "Five decades ago when my call was fresh and idealistic, I wanted to respond generously and give myself as a gift to God because that's what I was to my loving parents. As the years rolled on, it was becoming very clear that it was Christ's call that was the gift to me."

Sister Marina, we thank you for the 65 years you gifted us as teacher, organist, sister and friend. As you begin your eternity with our ever-generous God, remember us your family, your friends, your Franciscan Sisters. Amen. Alleluia!

Sister M. Marina Vaniscak, OSF
9 March 1919 - 23 January 2002

Born: March 9, 1919, Johnstown, Pennsylvania 817
Parents: Andrew and Catherine (Motyka) Vaniscak
Entered From: St. Stephen, Johnstown, Pennsylvania
Postulancy: September 8, 1936
Novitiate: August 12, 1937
Profession: August 12, 1939
Entered New Life: Wednesday, January 23, 2002, at Our Lady of Angels at 3:45 a.m.

Ministry History

1939 - 1940 Teacher; Grades 4, 5 & 6, Organist; Assumption Parish, Chicago, IL
 1940 - 1942 Teacher; Grades 3 & 4, Music & Organist; Sacred Heart, Chicago, IL
 1942 - 1948 Teacher; Grades 3 & 4, Music & Organist; St. Ludmilla, Chicago, IL
 1948 - 1951 Teacher; Grade 5, Organist; St. Stephen, Streator, IL
 1951 - 1952 Teacher; Grade 6, Organist and Music; Assumption, Chicago, IL
 1952 - 1955 Teacher; Grade 6; Organist and Music; Sacred Heart-Englewood, Chicago, IL
 1955 - 1957 Teacher; Grade 4 & 6; SS. Peter and Paul, Chicago, IL
 1957 - 1965 Teacher; Grade 7, Organist; St. Stephen, Johnstown, PA
 1965 - 1969 Teacher; Grade 7, Organist; Holy Family, Cleveland, OH
 1969 - 1979 Teacher; Grade 5 & 6, & Remedial; St. Edward, Ashland, OH
 1979 - 1991 Teacher; Remedial/Librarian; St. Edward, Ashland, OH
 1991 - 1994 Teacher Aide and Substitute; St. Edward, Ashland, OH
 1994 - 1995 Retired; St. Edward, Ashland, OH
 1995 - 1997 Tutor, St. Francis Learning Center; Motherhouse, Joliet, IL
 1997 - 2002 Retired; Our Lady of Angels Retirement Home, Joliet, IL

Wake: Monday, January 28, 2002, 2 - 7:00 p.m., Our Lady of Angels, Joliet, IL
Wake Service: Monday, January 28, 2002, 4:30 p.m., Our Lady of Angels, Joliet, IL
Mass of Christian Burial: Monday, January 28, 2002, 7:00 p.m., Our Lady of Angels, Joliet, IL
Burial: Tuesday, January 29, 2002; leaving Our Lady of Angels at 9:00 a.m.
 to Resurrection Cemetery, Romeoville, IL

Interment S8 - L334 - G2

Survived by: Mary Vaniscak, sister, and nieces and nephews.

Rest in Peace, Sister Marina