

Sisters of St. Francis

of Mary Immaculate

Sister Suzanne Lesniewski was born in Chicago on February 15, 1937, the daughter of Pearl (Januchowski) and Harry Lesniewski. After attending SS. Peter and Paul Grade School in Chicago, Suzanne went to high school at St. Francis Academy in Joliet. She earned a BA in history from the College of St. Francis and an MA in religious studies from Mundelein College.

In her early years as a vowed Joliet Franciscan, Suzanne was known by the religious name of Sister M. Hope. She began her career as a grade school teacher in several cities in Illinois: Chicago, Des Plaines, Lansing, Freeport and Joliet.

When Suzanne felt called to move from classroom teaching to directing catechetical programs, she was told by Sister Francine Zeller that she was not professionally prepared. She wasted no time enrolling in and completing a Master's program in religious education at Mundelein College. Those studies stood her in good stead as she went on to direct programs in numerous parishes for the next four decades until her retirement. She later served the Congregation as a Local Coordinator and in the Mission Advancement office.

Remembering her work in religious education, Suzanne wrote, "I enjoy the interaction I have with students, and parents, but most of all I enjoy being able to interact with the Catechists. Most of them are giving people and take their ministry to heart." On another occasion she wrote: "I work with the poor in 'spirit,' people who hunger for more of the spiritual and look to find ways to make it a part of their daily life."

It was probably the history major in Suzanne that made her a very dedicated annalist – especially in the modern era when many of us left that history-

Alleluia!



Sister Suzanne Lesniewski, OSF

recording practice behind. She wrote year after year of the significant events in her life and her ministry and the communities in which she lived.

It is possible that Suzanne's biggest struggle over much of her adult life was with her own body. At times when her spirit and will were so positive and strong, it was only the confines of her physical abilities that rebelled. After a stroke in her early adulthood, Suzanne started the good fight to keep going. Other illnesses could have but did not deter her from her sense of ministry and her living the Gospel life. In her last few years, she struggled to cope with physical ailments while her mind remained intact. This past fall and into winter, at the age of 84, her body would simply not give her the much-needed break she longed for.

Throughout her life, she enjoyed close relationships with her mother Pearl as well as her siblings. Her nieces and nephews especially valued her as a wisdom figure in their lives. She continued to stay in close touch with her sister Timi until her very last days when she could no longer communicate. After a lifetime of service and friendship, Suzanne will be missed dearly by her sisters in community and her many family members. Amen! Alleluia!

Sister Suzanne Lesniewski, OSF

February 15, 1938—January 16, 2023

<i>Born:</i>	February 15, 1938
<i>Parents:</i>	Jerome Lesniewski, Sr. and Pearl Januchowski
<i>Postulancy:</i>	September 5, 1955
<i>Novitiate:</i>	August 13, 1956
<i>First Profession:</i>	August 12, 1958
<i>Final Profession:</i>	August 12, 1961
<i>Entered New Life:</i>	January 16, 2023

Ministry History

1958-1959	Teacher: Grade 2, St. Joseph, Freeport, Illinois
1959-1960	Teacher: Grades 2 and 3, St. Francis Xavier, Chicago, Illinois
1960-1961	Teacher: Grades 2 and 4, St. Mary, Des Plaines, Illinois
1961-1963	Teacher: Grades 1 and 2, St. Jude, Joliet, Illinois
1963-1967	Teacher: Grades 1, 2 and 3, Sacred Heart, Chicago
1967-1968	Teacher: Grade 5, St. Ann, Lansing, Illinois
1968-1970	Teacher: Grade 5, St. Raymond, Joliet
1970-1971	Teacher: St. Ludmilla, Chicago
1971-1973	Religious Education Coordinator: St. Matthew, Champaign, Illinois
1973-1976	CCD Principal: St. Matthew, Champaign
1976-1978	Religious Education Coordinator: Notre Dame, Clarendon Hills, Illinois
1978-1981	Religious Education Coordinator: St. Mary, West Chicago, Illinois
1981-1989	Religious Education Coordinator: St. John the Baptist, Winfield, Illinois
1989-1998	Director of Religious Education: St. Joan of Arc, Lisle, Illinois
1998-1999	Director of Religious Education: St. Therese of Jesus, Aurora, Illinois
1999-2008	Director of Religious Education: St. Scholastica, Woodridge, Illinois
2008-2009	Sabbatical
2009-2010	Companion to Sisters: Our Lady of Angels Retirement Home, Joliet
2010-2017	Director of Planned Giving: Congregation/Tutor, Minister of Hospitality, RCIA Team Member, Worship Commission Member: Christ the Servant Parish, Woodridge, Illinois
2017-2018	Local Chapter Coordinator: Congregation, Joliet
2018-2019	Chairperson of Mass Coordinators and Worship Commission: Christ the Servant Parish/Local Chapter Coordinator: Congregation, Woodridge and Joliet
2019-2023	Ministry of Prayer and Presence: Our Lady of Angels, Joliet

<i>Interment:</i>	Section 8, Lot 345, Grave 7, Resurrection Cemetery, Romeoville, Illinois
<i>Predeceased by:</i>	Her parents, Harry Lesniewski and Pearl Januchowski, her brothers, Jerome (Barbara) Lesniewski, and Gregory Lesniewski, and her sister Barbara (Ernest) Toso
<i>Survived by:</i>	Her sister, Virginia (Ronald) Konczalski, many nieces, nephews and cherished friends

Rest in Peace, Sister Suzanne!