



Sisters of St. Francis of Mary Immaculate

On Sunday morning, June 21, 2015, our sister, Marilyn, was enfolded by the radiant beauty of sunlight filtering through the window of her bedroom window. The stormy night of teeming rain, rolling thunder and crackling lightening had given way to an atmosphere of peace and calm. Her breathing slowed as did the beating of her generous and kind heart. As she made her transition from this life to eternal life, her long-awaited and beloved angels seemed to have made their presence known. Safely and securely, they led her into paradise to abide in the Heart of God.

Born to her parents, Pearl Zimmerman and Charles Franze, on July 17, 1932, Marilyn was a “Joliet girl” from the very beginning of her eighty-two years of life. Taking delight in being the younger sister of her older brother, Charles, she knew she had a lifelong friend whom she could count on. Yet, important as family was for her throughout her childhood, as an eighth grader at St. John Parish School, Marilyn began to think about her future. Inspired by the Joliet Franciscan Sisters who were her teachers, and encouraged in her Franciscan aspirations by Fr. Conan Mitchell, O.F.M. (1915-2009), Marilyn enrolled at St. Francis Academy, where she studied for three years before entering the Congregation as a postulant on September 4, 1950. She was received into the novitiate on August 12, 1951, and given her religious name, Sister M. Jacinta. Two years later, with a joyful heart, she made her first profession of vows and in 1956 she made her final profession as a Sister of St. Francis of Mary Immaculate.

Dedicating herself to the care of others, Sr. Marilyn ministered to her Sisters as well as to the people they served in Alabama, Illinois and Ohio. Legendary for her efforts and energies in the culinary arts, she was a welcomed contributor to the quality of life of those around her. Always endeavoring to see Jesus in each and every person she met, she was truly a Gospel woman who never tired of living out the call of discipleship as expressed in Matthew’s Gospel: *“For I was hungry and you gave me food, I was thirsty and you gave me drink, a stranger and you welcomed me”* (25:35-40). An exemplar of Franciscan hospitality, she had a magnetic way of drawing others in, of making each person feel at home,

Alleluia!



Sister Marilyn (Jean) Franze, OSF

of letting everyone know that someone cared, of assuring all those who came into her presence that they were special and, moreover, worthy of her time and energy. Though often in physical pain and discomfort, she rarely let on that it wasn’t a good day. As long as there were treats to be shared and people to be nourished – in body and spirit, Sr. Marilyn could be counted upon to deliver a heartfelt welcome and a snack that satisfied, along with her total attention and personal interest. Even in her final days, surrounded by those who loved her, she shared her affection and gratitude with the same kind of care and concern as though she were offering coffee and cake in her famous D-1 kitchenette.

In January of 1962, when Our Lady of Angels Retirement Home first opened its doors, Sr. Marilyn was there. An ambassador of kindness and solicitude, her legacy of love for the Sisters, residents, visitors and workers of OLA spanned more than fifty years. A mentor and friend to the people who worked in food services and house-keeping, a companion and care-giver for residents, a friendly Franciscan Sister who made a point of putting visitors at ease – everyone from toddlers to senior citizens – Sr. Marilyn embodied the best of OLA and the best of the Sisters of St. Francis. Recognized by the President of the United States and the Governor of the State of Illinois for her amazing record of over 8,000 hours of volunteer service, Sr. Marilyn held her accomplishment modestly and quietly.

Impelled by the love of Christ (II Cor 5:14), Sr. Marilyn never tired of sharing with others that the meaning of her Franciscan religious life was to be found “in serving others graciously, whole-heartedly and generously.” So it was that she began and so it was that she persevered - all the days of her life. Alleluia. Alleluia!

Sister Marilyn Franze, OSF

July 17, 1932 — June 21, 2015

Born: July 17, 1932
Parents: Charles Franze and Pearl (Zimmerman) Franze
Postulancy: September 4, 1950
Novitiate: August 12, 1951
First Profession: August 12, 1953
Final Profession: August 13, 1956
Entered New Life: June 21, 2015

Ministry History

1953-1954 Domestic Work: St. Mary, Des Plaines, Illinois, and St. Joseph, Pesotum, Illinois
1954-1955 Kitchen: St. Francis Convent, Joliet, Illinois and Domestic Work, St. Mary, Fairfield, Alabama
1955-1956 Domestic Work: St. Michael, Worthington, Ohio
1956-1957 Domestic Work: St. Michael, Sigel, Illinois
1957-1958 Infirmary Work: St. Francis Convent, Joliet
1958-1959 Domestic Work: St. Joseph, Elgin, Illinois
1959-1962 Infirmary Kitchen III: St. Francis Convent, Joliet
1962-1970 Tray Service: Our Lady of Angels, Joliet
1970-1971 Nurses' Aide: Our Lady of Angels, Joliet
1971-2002 Food Service: Our Lady of Angels, Joliet
2002-2003 Community Service: Our Lady of Angels, Joliet

Wake: Thursday, June 25, 2015, 2:00-6:45 p.m., Our Lady of Angels, Joliet
Prayer Service: Thursday, June 25, 2015, 4:45 p.m., Our Lady of Angels, Joliet
Mass of Christian Burial: Thursday, June 25, 2015, 7:00 p.m., Our Lady of Angels, Joliet
Burial: Friday, June 26, 2015, leaving Our Lady of Angels at 9:00 a.m. to Resurrection Cemetery, Romeoville, Illinois
Interment: Section 8, Lot 354, Grave 10, Resurrection Cemetery
Predeceased by: By her parents, Charles and Pearl (Zimmerman) Franze, her sister-in-law, Margaret (Ancel) Franze and her nephew, Charles Jr.
Survived by: Her older brother, Charles, and her niece Marjean Franze.

Rest in Peace, Sister Marilyn