



## SISTERS OF ST. FRANCIS

PO BOX 100 OLDENBURG, IN 47036  
WWW.OLDENBURGFRAUCISCANS.ORG  
FACEBOOK: FRANCISCAN SISTERS OF OLDENBURG



S. FRANCIS JOAN CLEMENTS, OSF

October 8, 2019

Dear Sisters and Associates, Co-workers, Family and Friends,

At 10 o'clock Sunday morning, October 6, Sister Francis Joan Clements gently released her spirit into oneness with God. Just moments before, those of us in chapel heard the words of the first reading, "Stir into flame the gift of God that you have been given" (2 Tm 1:6). Francis Joan had spent her life stirring her gifts into flame and generously sharing them with others. But on this morning, she was ready to let the bright, bright flame of her life merge with the radiance of God.

Francis Joan was born on June 2, 1925 in Clementsville, KY, the third of four children born to Robert and Anna Clements. She was named Anita Evelyn. Because their father's work was in St. Bernard, OH, the family lived some years in Kentucky and other years in St. Bernard. It was while working in the library at OLA with Sisters Eva Catherine and Geraldine Marie that her Franciscan vocation took root. She entered the Community on September 8, 1945, having told Sister Hortense that she thought she had a vocation, but she didn't want to do housework! She wanted to work with children.

Francis Joan's teaching career began with Sisters she credited with giving her a strong foundation in prayer and education. Sisters who lived and taught with her describe her as "150% an enthusiastic teacher", as "someone with a real sense of a child's potential", "an inspiration". She loved the classroom and is remembered by those she taught as a strong and affirming teacher. One grateful former student told me that Francis Joan had worked with him almost every day after school when he was in her classroom. Her ability to help him with reading and writing skills opened new doors to his future.

Along the way, Francis Joan made wonderful friends. She didn't know a stranger. Always there was a kind word, an interest in the other person's life, something to laugh about. One of those special friends was Fr. Rock Travnkar, OFM whom she got to know when stationed at St. Francis parish in Cincinnati. Later, she would spend summers volunteering in Hazard, KY as secretary, and cook for the seminarians under Fr. Rock, and also as all-round presence to those in need. As S. Marya said of her, "She had a huge heart for people who were poor and struggling."

In her retirement years, we continued to experience Francis Joan as full of life and laughter. It was a rare day indeed if she was down. She was not slow to offer her services where she saw a need. Those first years found her moderating a dorm at Oldenburg Academy, helping with special needs adults at Oldenburg, reading to Sisters with limited vision, tutoring Vietnamese children, and eventually taking part in the Adopt-a-Sis Program with Academy students. Reflecting on those years, she wrote that these varied activities kept her life rich and meaningful.

“I am especially grateful for our loving community, my times of private prayer, and being here for my sisters, Pat and Merny and my many loving nieces and nephews, and friends who call on me for prayer.”

The nurses in St. Clare Hall who ministered to Francis Joan were also in her prayer. Often she would mention how grateful she was for their attentive care. They, in turn, loved her joyful presence and her eagerness to share stories of all kinds. She will be sorely missed by them.

Just to step into Francis Joan’s room was enough to recognize how very special her family was to her. Pictures of relatives abound there – with a special place in her heart for her great-great niece, Evvie, who was named after her. Francis Joan relished family visitors, loved sharing family stories with others and pointing out the latest photos in her gallery.

Above all, Francis Joan was a woman of prayer. She had written that when she first expressed interest in the Community, Sister Hortense had told her that this was a praying Community. She clearly took that to heart. She had special love of the Eucharist and all things Franciscan. In a reflection she wrote recently, regarding family and friends who had preceded her in death, she noted: “As we open our hearts to continued relationships with those who have passed, we find ourselves helped on at many turns. Our loved ones continue to love us as we do them.” We are grateful for all the ways Francis Joan stirred into flame the gifts God gave her, and now we trust that she will indeed continue to love and pray for us in even deeper ways.

Thankful for this woman of faith,



Sister Barbara Leonhard  
*For the General Council*

#### SISTER FRANCIS JOAN (Anita) CLEMENTS

Born: June 2, 1925

Entered Religious Life: September 8, 1945

Entered Eternal Life: October 6, 2019

#### MISSIONS AT WHICH S. FRANCIS JOAN SERVED:

1948-1953	St. Francis de Sales, Indianapolis IN	1978-1981	St. Francis, Cincinnati OH
1953-1954	St. Joseph, Evansville IN	1981-1982	St. Peter, Chillicothe OH
1954-1955	St. Michael, Brookville IN	1982-1987	St. Joseph, Princeton IN
1955-1962	St. Ann, Hamilton OH	1987-1988	St. Wendel, Wadesville IN
1962-1965	St. Joseph, Cincinnati OH	1988-1992	ICA Academy, Oldenburg IN
1965-1978	St. Joseph, Kansas City MO	1992-2019	Motherhouse, Oldenburg IN

*Funeral arrangements have been entrusted to Weigel Funeral Home – visit their website to view Sister’s online memorial, and if desired, an online condolence may be left on the site to share with her family and the Franciscan Sisters – [www.Weigelfh.com](http://www.Weigelfh.com)*

*Memorial Donations in Sister’s memory may be given online at [www.OldenburgFranciscans.org](http://www.OldenburgFranciscans.org)*

