



SISTERS OF ST. FRANCIS

PO BOX 100 OLDENBURG, IN 47036

WWW.OLDENBURGFRAUCISCANS.ORG

FACEBOOK: FRANCISCAN SISTERS OF OLDENBURG



S. FRANCIS ANN LEWIS, OSF

August 11, 2019

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

The words to the opening song for our Sunday liturgy seemed to echo perfectly S. Francis Ann's sentiments as she waited in a hospital bed during the early morning hours:

"I want to walk as a child of the light. I want to follow Jesus.
I'm looking for the coming of Christ. I want to be with Jesus.
When we have run with patience the race, we shall know the joy of Jesus."

--I Want to Walk as a Child of the Light

I understand that, after each of our recent deaths, Francis Ann had wondered aloud, "Why not me?" The very words of today's Gospel assure us of her response then to today's invitation: "When the master came and knocked, she opened the door for him at once. How happy are those servants whose master finds them awake and ready when he returns!"

Dorothy Ann Lewis was born in Terre Haute, Indiana on May 31, 1925, the fifth child of George and Mary Farrell Lewis. As she shared in an interview with her friend S. Donna Rohman, "My life changed after my mom gave birth to two more children, both of whom died young. Mom was sickly from then on and my sister Rosemary became the 'mother's helper' for the family. My sisters and brothers contracted scarlet fever about this time and I was sent to live with a neighbor lady. When the stock market crashed in 1929, my dad lost his job. He was hired as the janitor at St. Ann's Church and was given a rent-free house so we moved there. I admired both of my parents so much for the sacrifices they made for our family."

Dorothy knew that her mother always prayed that one of her children would be a religious—and she took that seriously. Freshman year at the Providence juniorate was not a happy experience. It was a Capuchin priest who came for a parish mission who knew of the Oldenburg Community and suggested she join them. Early on, Dorothy felt that she could not be a teacher; she thought the Sisters understood that. After her canonical year, however, S. Francis Ann was sent out to teach primary grades. Nervous as she was when introduced to her first class of second graders, one little boy raised his hand and said, "That boy said you're an old battle ax!" Francis Ann at that time was all of 22! Teaching continued to be her ministry for the next 25 years, though she never found it easy.

Moving back to the Motherhouse in the early 1970's, Francis Ann worked in the linen room and the telephone room. All her adult life she experienced much physical pain. Early deaths of her parents, and later those of her siblings, brought on emotional distress as well. Still, she shared, "I tried to be of service as my body would allow me each day."

Having experienced various forms of poverty herself, Francis Ann was especially attentive to poor children, sewing dresses for the little girls. Social justice was a deeply-held value for her. Even in retirement Francis Ann tried to learn all she could about world happenings and faithfully wrote to U.S. political leaders, urging a social justice stance.

Summing up her life on the occasion of her 60th jubilee, Francis Ann wrote, “As my life unfolded, God was with me always—through the ups and downs as teacher, dorm mother, housekeeper; by helping me be a compassionate presence for children who were lonely or having troubles; by being my constant strength through bouts of depression and many physical ailments.” Concluding her autobiography—and now, her life—she ended: “Once again I go to sleep with a grateful heart, thanking God for all the Love He has given me!”

As we bid our Sister farewell on this feast of St. Clare, we too are grateful for Francis Ann’s Franciscan life among us. We offer our sincere sympathy to her family and friends—and our gratitude to her caregivers in St. Clare Hall. With Francis Ann, we sing in jubilation the closing song to this Sunday’s liturgy:

“Soon and very soon we are goin’ to see the King. Soon and very soon we are goin’ to see the King.
No more cryin’ there; we are goin’ to see the King. No more cryin’ there; we are goin’ to see the King.
No more dyin’ there; we are goin’ to see the King. No more dyin’ there; we are goin’ to see the King.
Hallelujah, hallelujah; we’re goin’ to see the King.”

--*Soon and Very Soon*

In peaceful remembrance,



Sister Christa Franzer
For the General Council

SISTER FRANCIS ANN LEWIS, OSF

Birth: May 31, 1925

Entrance into Religious Life: January 31, 1943

Entrance into Eternal Life: August 11, 2019

MISSIONS AT WHICH S. FRANCIS ANN SERVED:

1944-1945	St. Andrew, Richmond IN	1963-1964	St. Francis, Cincinnati OH
1945-1948	ICA Dining Rm, Oldenburg IN	1964-1965	St. Joseph, Cincinnati OH
1948-1949	St. Peter, Hamilton OH	1965-1966	Sacred Heart, Cincinnati OH
1949-1952	Little Flower, Indianapolis IN	1966	St. Pius, Cincinnati OH
1952-1953	Our Lady of Lourdes, Indianapolis IN	1966-1967	St. Catherine, Cincinnati OH
1953	Holy Trinity, Indianapolis IN	1967-1971	St. Louis, Batesville IN
1953-1955	St. Anthony, Dayton OH	1971-1984	Motherhouse, Oldenburg IN
1955-1956	Our Lady of Mercy, Dayton OH	1984-1986	Shalom Community, Indianapolis, IN
1956-1957	St. Aloysius, Cincinnati OH	1986-1994	Motherhouse, Oldenburg IN
1957-1958	St. Vincent, Vincennes IN	1994-1995	Minnesota
1958-1959	St. Henry, St. Louis MO	1995-2019	Motherhouse, Oldenburg IN
1959-1963	St. Clement, St. Bernard OH		

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

Memorial Donations in Sister’s memory may be given online at www.OldenburgFranciscans.org

