



## SISTERS OF ST. FRANCIS

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WWW.OLDENBURGFRAUCISCANS.ORG



June 21, 2022

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

S. Maureen Mahon, OSF

As the season of spring began to transition into summer on the evening of June 20, S. Maureen Mahon let go of her earthly life and entered into life eternal. Perhaps Maureen would have said that her Creator finished the tapestry of her life that night. In her own words, "God has been like a Weaver all these years in my life, spinning a tapestry which includes bright threads as well as dark ones, but always spinning and leading."

Maureen was born in Cincinnati on a snowy day, January 28, 1936, the eighth of ten children. Her parents were Daniel and Anna Mahon. Maureen remembered the simple joys of large families. Some of the bright threads at the beginning of her tapestry included annual family picnics in a nearby park, and many summer days when aunts, and cousins visited. Such occasions often ended with a sing-a-long initiated by her fun-loving Uncle Art. She also spoke fondly of her mother's praying with them each night and blessing them with holy water.

Maureen first met our Sisters when she attended grade school at St. Vincent de Paul School, Riverside. "Their spirit of joy and simplicity impressed me." Maureen admitted that "early primary days found me wanting to become a Sister. However, as I became more and more engaged in high school activities (Seton High School), I shoved the sisterhood idea further and further back in my mind." Yet, at the end of her senior year, she found herself once again sensing the call to religious life. While many of her classmates entered the Sisters of Charity, Maureen entered the Oldenburg Franciscans on September 8, 1955.

When Maureen began teaching, she taught primary grades. S. Olga Wittekind remembers living with Maureen at Portage des Sioux, Missouri, and credits Maureen with helping her learn how to teach in a creative and fun-loving way. Maureen's warmth and understanding endeared her to little ones everywhere she taught.

When she entered the community, there was no opportunity to become a foreign missionary (a high school dream of hers). Five years after she entered, however, the community had accepted the invitation to serve in Papua New Guinea. In 1966, Maureen happily became a part of this venture. "Finally, my dream became a reality as I stepped upon 'holy ground' in Papua New Guinea." For twenty-nine years she poured herself into a variety of positions as she was needed: first teaching primary grades; then training catechists, and later directing the Liturgical Catechetical Institute. Each ministry added more bright threads to Maureen's life tapestry.

Maureen loved the people in PNG, most often referring to them as "the beautiful people of Papua New Guinea." They loved her, too. I happened to be in Mendi one year as Maureen was returning from leave. The next morning as we walked up to the church, elderly women began grabbing her around the ankles until I was sure she would be tackled to the ground. Later, I learned that when someone hugged a person around the legs, or especially the ankles, it was a sign of great affection.

Outreach was in no way over for Maureen when she returned to the States. Another favorite place of ministry was St. Thomas Parish in Zanesville, OH. Here Maureen was a pastoral minister, working especially with the sick and the elderly. The dark threads of loss of family members and friends had by then become part of her life tapestry, preparing her for this new ministry. The Pastor there included this special note of gratitude for Maureen in the parish bulletin, "I want to thank S. Maureen who so effectively and affectionately touches the lives of our sick and elderly parishioners. Most of the everyday hands-on contact and care of the sick at St. Thomas is done by her. Her gentleness and joyful heart, which she unfailingly exhibits, mark her as a true daughter of Francis and Clare."

Maureen was always a generous, self-giving person. When she retired to the Motherhouse she continued to bless those around her with her smile, her infectious laughter, and her genuine interest in whoever was with her. In these past eight years, her warmth and prayer gifted so many of us. Her gracious presence drew people to her. This past week I heard so many descriptions of the bright threads in Maureen's tapestry that she freely shared. "She was a good listener." "She was joyful; she lightened everything up." "She had a wonderful sense of humor." The nurses actually started a list of some of Maureen's unique sayings – such as "being slower than a herd of turtles", and "Okie dokie, artichokie!" S. Clare Teixeira, who frequently drove Maureen to doctor's appointments, shared that Maureen was always grateful: "No matter what was happening, no matter the intensity of discomfort or pain, she always thanked me for being her sister."

We extend our sympathy to Maureen's family, her nieces and nephews, to her good friend, S. Marilyn Chall, her classmates, and all of her other friends who will miss her greatly. She would want us to thank the nurses and aides in St. Clare Hall on her behalf, as she spoke often of how well she was cared for.

In gratitude for a life beautifully woven to completion,

  
S. Barbara Leonhard  
*For the General Council*

SISTER. MAUREEN MAHON (formerly S. Zita)

Birth: January 28, 1936

Entered Religious Life: September 8, 1955

Entered Eternal Life: June 20, 2022

**MISSIONS AT WHICH S. MAUREEN SERVED:**

1957-1959 Holy Trinity, St. Louis MO

1959-1962 St. Catherine, St. Louis MO

1962-1964 St. Francis, Portage des Sioux MO

1964-1965 Our Lady of Victory, Cincinnati OH

1965-1969 Tari, South Highlands, Papua New Guinea

1969-1974 Mendi, Papua New Guinea

1974-1978 Tari, South Highlands, Papua New Guinea

1978-1995 Mendi, Papua New Guinea

1995-1997 Sabbatical

1997-1999 Our Lady of Lourdes, Washington MO

1999-2000 St. Anthony Messenger, Cincinnati OH

2000-2014 St. Thomas Aquinas, Zanesville OH

2014-2022 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)