



SISTERS OF ST. FRANCIS

PO BOX 100 OLDENBURG, IN 47036

WWW.OLDENBURGFRAUCISCANS.ORG



March 28, 2023

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

Peacefully, on this early spring afternoon as S. Michelle Corliss and S. Bernice Roell prayed at her bedside, our beloved S. Sharon L. Sheridan passed into the loving arms of God. What delight she must have known as she saw God face to face!

Sharon was born in Indianapolis, Indiana on November 13, 1931, the oldest daughter of Bernard Joseph Sheridan and Henrietta (Connie) Katherine Boehm. Her sister Carolyn was born two years later, and then, when Sharon was 14 years old, sister Connie completed the family. She recognized her Irish father's and her German mother's influence on her early years, as well as her mother's determination to have her daughters receive the "mothering" which she herself had missed. A sensitive child, Sharon grew up committed to pleasing her parents.

For her elementary education, Sharon attended St. Therese, the Little Flower School in Indianapolis. There, she noted, "the faith instilled in me at home was greatly reinforced. I learned that mistakes can be forgiven, that it doesn't take too much courage to stand up for what you believe is right. . . I even learned to forge ahead when things go wrong. I remember each of my teachers (they were all Sisters) and each made her mark on me." Reflecting later on these experiences, she noted, "There are many memories that I cherish . . . I loved the hymns, the processions, St. Therese. The beauty of all those roses on the altar and the scent that filled the church are still very special to me. Many of my classmates felt the same because all the girls took Therese for their Confirmations names . . ." Sharon's devotion to St. Therese was a powerful element her entire life.

Already influenced by Oldenburg Franciscans, Sharon spent her high school days at the Academy of the Immaculate Conception (now Oldenburg Academy). Upon graduation, she enrolled in the freshman class at Marian College (now Marian University) in Indianapolis. Recognizing a call to religious life, Sharon entered the Sisters of St. Francis on September 8, 1950. Later, asked about her aspirations for her future as an Oldenburg Franciscan, Sharon wrote, "My deepest hopes are to allow my life to give honor and glory to God, to serve him through service of others. If people whom I serve can find in my manner and attitude the warmth of Francis and the generosity of the Lord, I will feel I've been successful."

This determination to serve the Lord through others became the hallmark of Sharon's life and ministry. From her earliest days she was thoroughly an educator, constantly striving to improve the lives of others – children and adults--- by sharing wisdom and common-sense understandings. Her early teaching assignments took her to Cincinnati and St. Louis, Missouri. Then, equipped with a Master's degree in Educational Administration from St. Louis University, Sharon served as principal in both Cincinnati and Batesville, Indiana – positions that she dearly loved. She expanded her influence by accepting the position of Elementary School Consultant for the Archdiocese of Indianapolis, where she served for four years. Stretching herself even further, Sharon completed her Master's degree in Child Development/Parent Education at Purdue University, which prepared her to accept the ministry as Parent Educator in the Archdiocesan Office of Family Life. There, she helped parishes devise programs to strengthen parents in their approach to successful child-raising.

Sharon began a similar venture in 1984 in the Diocese of Gaylord, Michigan, serving first as Coordinator, then as Director of the Family Life Office. Her ten years in this position found creative venues as she shared her experiences in child development, parent education, marriage preparation, divorce recovery, bereavement, aging, and family ministry. She provided public radio spots on the subject of family life and frequently appeared as speaker for various family-oriented occasions. Her weekly column in the Gaylord diocesan paper, *Catholic Weekly*, offered sound advice as she spoke to parents as wisdom figure, educator, and friend.

Sharon returned to Indianapolis and took a position in child care, which allowed her to be closer to her ailing mother. As her mother's condition worsened, however, Sharon became her mother's full-time support at home,

hospital and nursing home, until her mother's passing. For this year of family ministry, Sharon noted, "My gratitude to my community has no bounds."

In 1997, Sharon was hired as Family Life Coordinator for the Diocese of Wheeling, West Virginia. In this new role, Sharon expressed her main goal: to "reach out as directly as possible to the people, particularly in the rural areas, and the southern and eastern portions of the state. I want to be there," she stated. "I don't want to be in the office shuffling paper. There is no place too distant and no group too small for me to come to."

Then, in 2003 while looking for her next ministry, Sharon discovered an ad for a small school in Red Lake, Minnesota. This brought her to St. Mary's Mission School, serving the Chippewa Indians as school principal. "My mother had instilled in me a love for the Indian culture, and here was a way I could experience it firsthand, she reflected." Amid the difficulties suffered by this marginalized community, Sharon realized significant improvement taking place. "I felt like a real missionary to a people with less in worldly goods, living on very poor land," she remembered. "God gave me five good years with these Native Americans. One little boy came walking into our school one day with this inquiry: 'Is this the Jesus school?'"

When Sharon retired to the Motherhouse in 2008, her educational ventures took a fresh form. For several years she continued to make presentations at Oldenburg Franciscan Center, working on special projects. Using her writing and organizational skills, she prepared reflections for the Center's blog, and maintained the DVD collection for the Community.

We extend our deep sympathy to Sharon's sister, Connie, her nieces, nephews and extended family, and to Sharon's classmates and friends. We thank the nursing staff and Pastoral Care team in St. Clare Hall for their loving care of Sharon these last years. May Sharon experience now the eternal joy of those who served God so faithfully through others!

In loving remembrance,

S. Delouise Menges



For the General Council

SISTER SHARON L. (formerly S. Regine) SHERIDAN

Born: November 13, 1931

Entered Religious Life: September 8, 1950

Entered Eternal Life: March 28, 2023

MISSIONS AT WHICH S. SHARON SERVED:

1953-1957	St. Leo, Cincinnati OH	1994-1995	Sabbatical
1957-1959	Holy Cross, St. Louis MO	1995-1997	Child Empowerment Prog., Cincinnati OH
1959-1966	Holy Trinity, St. Louis MO	1997-1998	Job Search
1966-1972	Corpus Christi, Cincinnati OH	1998-1999	Family Life Office, Wheeling WV
1972-1976	Archdiocese, Indianapolis IN	1999-2000	Job Search
1976-1977	St. James, Cincinnati OH	2000-2004	Marian University, Indianapolis IN
1977-1981	St. Louis, Batesville IN	2004-2008	St. Mary Mission, Red Lake MN
1981-1983	Student, Purdue U. Lafayette IN	2008-2009	Marian University, Indianapolis IN
1983-1984	Marian U/St. Monica, Indianapolis IN	2009-2023	Motherhouse, Oldenburg IN
1984-1994	Diocese, Gaylord MI		

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