



## SISTERS OF ST. FRANCIS

PO Box 100 OLDENBURG, IN 47036  
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S. JEAN SORA, OSF

December 26, 2022

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

The day after Christmas, in the early evening, S. Jean Sora, our oldest Community member went home to our Loving God. There she joined the heavenly choirs in singing her "Gloria in Excelsis Deo"! She also joined her classmate, S. Dominica Doyle. This past summer they celebrated 80 years as Sisters of St. Francis.

Mary Louise was born to John and Mary Sora in Middletown, Ohio, as the tenth of eleven children. Her parents were born in Naples, Italy. True to her Italian heritage S. Jean was a great one for planning celebrations. S. Jean came from a musical family with seven out of the eleven children studying music. They even had a family band as each of them played a different instrument.

Of course, S. Jean's love of music began at an early age. She began piano lessons in the second grade with Sister Carletta at St. John's in Middletown. Not long after, she was allowed to go to the choir loft and play the right hand of "Silent Night" as Sister provided the left hand and pedals. That was the beginning of her desire to be a Franciscan Sister just like S. Carletta. S. Jean's mother had entered the convent in Italy and had to leave because of sickness in the family. Her mother felt that S. Jean was filling in her place in the convent.

Music continued to be her main interest throughout grade school and high school. During grade school, she learned piano. In high school, she learned wind instruments in preparation for becoming a music teacher. As a novice, she took organ lessons; from then on playing the organ became a lifelong occupation. At Marian College, S. Jean was thrilled to begin playing for Benediction with Sister Vitalis by her side.

There are many stories that can and will be told about S. Jean. S. Dominica Doyle (deceased) described her classmate as a go-getter. S. Jean was S. Margie Niemer's first music teacher and she describes how S. Jean managed a marching band of 180 students at St. Clement in St. Bernard. When S. Barbara Riemensperger entered the convent, S. Jean was the one who "dressed" her. S. Irene Hoff tells that during Sr. Jean's days at St. Vincent, she was dorm mother for the older girls and, of course, she had a performing band with them. She was like a "butterfly" flitting around getting everything done and was very artistic.

Eventually S. Jean found herself back at St. John and Holy Family, Middletown as a Parish Minister in addition to being organist and choir director and directing a Hand Bell Choir. The choir members attached a seat belt to the organ bench so she would not fall off during Mass. While she was there, she celebrated her 50<sup>th</sup> Jubilee and soon after taught herself to play the harp. S. Jean would say, "Nothing gives me more satisfaction than my music. It enhances my prayer and, I hope, the lives of others."

S. Jean was named Religious of the Year by the Ohio Knights of Columbus. She was nicknamed Goliath because of her impact on the non-Catholic community. S. Jean held bingo twice weekly where she also distributed food and clothing as needed and even counseled some people. For many of those attending, she was the only sister they had ever known. She said, "I have to be extra careful to be good." In the parish she organized a "Young at Heart" group for people over the age of 50. According to her, this was a "wonderful, fun" group of 120-members cooking for their luncheons, going on trips and playing cards.

Our own Marian University honored S. Jean with the Mary McNulty Young Award for Distinguished Achievement in Community Service. S. Jean said, "It is important that people see a difference because we're here." Wherever S. Jean was, people certainly did see a difference.

We extend our deepest sympathy to S. Jean's nieces and nephews and other relatives and to her Sisters and Associates in Community. Our special thanks and sympathy to our nursing staff in St. Clare Hall and to the Pastoral Care team who so lovingly cared for S. Jean, to her many friends and beloved former students of music.

We are grateful S. Jean for generously sharing her musical talents and vivacious spirit with so many.

In joyful memory,



S. Annette Grisley  
For the General Council

SISTER JEAN (Mary Louise) SORA

Birth: May 4, 1925

Entrance into Community: September 8, 1942

Entrance into Eternal Life: December 26, 2022

MISSIONS AT WHICH S. JEAN SERVED:

1945-49	Holy Trinity, St. Louis MO	1958-65	St. Clement, St. Bernard OH
1949-51	Our Lady of Lourdes, Indianapolis IN	1965-66	St. Ann, Hamilton OH
1951-53	St. Peter, Hamilton OH	1966-N'71	St. Vincent, Vincennes IN
1953-55	Our Lady of Perpetual Help, Cincinnati OH	N'71-2013	St. John, Middletown OH
1955-58	St. Mary, New Albany IN	2013-22	Motherhouse

*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.OldenburghFranciscans.org](http://www.OldenburghFranciscans.org)