



SISTERS OF ST. FRANCIS

PO BOX 100 OLDENBURG, IN 47036

WWW.OLDENBURGFRAUCISCANS.ORG

June 12, 2021

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

For our Sister Kathleen McCarthy the Journey is now complete. The Vision is one she followed throughout her life—a Vision patterned on the words of our Constitution:

“While striving to be poor in possessions, we seek to be rich in loving, valuing the human person as Jesus did. By our profession of poverty, we recognize our special bond with the people for whom Jesus and Francis showed particular concern.”

--- Vision and Journey



S. KATHLEEN MCCARTHY, OSF
FORMERLY S. MARY AGNES

Kathleen was the second of eight children, the first daughter born to Joseph and Inez McCarthy. Since in a single sentence Kathleen mentioned in her autobiography that the banks crashed in 1929, just two months after her birth, one might wonder how this event affected her, even in later life, as it did most everyone throughout the country.

Another occurrence with profound implications took place in August before Kathleen's second grade year. “I was struck by a car as I was crossing the street. There were no broken bones, but I was unconscious for eleven days, suffering a brain concussion. My life changed, with my family becoming ultra-protective of me. My brothers were not to hit me, get rough with me, etc. I was also aware that I might not live through my teens. As I have met difficult situations or really great challenges in my life, I've always asked, ‘Is this what You saved me for, Lord?’”

Meeting the Oldenburg Franciscans for the first time at OLA, Kathleen joined the Community in 1948, becoming Sister Mary Agnes. Though she began her ministry as a first-grade teacher, she eventually taught students in all eight elementary grades, and served as an elementary principal for 26 years. This role in administration began at St. Clare in Cincinnati. When she left there after serving as principal for 12 years, she declared that she loved that place—“even loved the mortar between the bricks.”

Leaving St. Pius after the next 13 years was even more difficult. As Kathleen explained, “My ministry there was definitely the most varied of any I have experienced. I was a part of everything in the parish and the school. This took me into neighborhoods, homes, businesses and community gatherings as well as church and school. I was very involved in the work of the Comboni Missionaries at St. Pius, and participated in many of their programs.” No wonder she later summed up her life there, saying, “I work eight days out of every seven.”

In a 1985 article written for our Community newsletter, author Dot Lindsey explained: “Evangelization is one of their main concerns. Home visitation is a real aspect of reaching out in the neighborhood. In addition, money must be raised to meet the financial needs and crises of the community. One of the main sources of income is bingo where Kathleen and co-workers spend Friday evenings and Sunday afternoons. Sunday mornings find Kathleen providing music for two Masses. In this way, Kathleen continues to use the flute-playing skills she learned at OLA.”

“Summers provide a time for giving help to the children who might otherwise roam the streets. The summer program includes Bible school, remedial classes, enrichment opportunities, preschool and sewing classes.” Sounds like Kathleen was also engaged in ministry thirteen months out of every twelve! Asked why her commitment was so all-encompassing, Kathleen shared, “Because I want to help people to lift themselves up in a system that makes that so hard for them to do. Because I care about the spiritual, material and educational needs of the people of the community.” Is this perhaps what God saved her for, following her accident much earlier in life?

When, during her later years in education, Kathleen returned to teaching, one of her students heard that she had previously served as principal. When Kathleen assured him this was true, he responded, “Why would you want to go back to teaching? Being a principal is so much easier!”

It is obvious when reading of Kathleen’s long history in education that she loved the little children, and that she was a hard worker, persistent in getting things done. Friends describe her as caring and pleasant, never hard to please, always grateful, and sensitive to others’ needs. Another paid tribute to Kathleen, characterizing her as “the kindest person I ever met.”

We offer our sympathy now to Kathleen’s brother Jerry, and to her devoted nieces and nephews. Our loving support also extends to her faithful friend and companion S. Miriam Kaeser, to Kathleen’s classmates and friends, and to our nursing and pastoral care staff who tended to Kathleen for many years.

For our Sister Kathleen McCarthy, the Journey is complete. Her Vision now centers on her God whom she has served so faithfully. May we, inspired by her self-giving, likewise dedicate our days in generous service.

Following the Vision as we continue on our Journey,



Sister Christa Franzer
For the General Council

SISTER KATHLEEN (FORMERLY S. MARY AGNES) MCCARTHY

Birth: July 6, 1929

Entrance into Community: February 1, 1948

Entrance into Eternal Life: June 12, 2021

MISSIONS AT WHICH S. KATHLEEN SERVED:

1949-1958	St. Lawrence, Lawrenceburg IN
1958-1961	Holy Trinity, Indianapolis IN
1961-1965	Our Lady of Victory, Cincinnati OH
1965-1977	St. Clare, Cincinnati OH
1977-1978	St. Catherine, Cincinnati OH
1978-1991	St. Pius, Cincinnati OH
1991-2006	S. Boniface, Cincinnati OH
2006-2008	Retired, Cincinnati OH
2008-2021	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

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