



In Loving Memory

Sister Mary Ann Huelsing

With the assistance of a mid-wife, the second of six children arrived in the early hours of December 9, 1926, in St. Louis, to Febronia (Dillon) and Joseph Huelsing. She was baptized at St. Anthony of Padua, St. Louis, on December 12, 1926 and named Mary (after Our Lady) Ann (after her godmother). Mary Ann grew up with four sisters and a brother, her youngest sibling. During the Depression, the family was put out of their home in south St. Louis and moved in with her paternal grandparents. When she was five years old, the family was able to move to a two-family flat near the newly established St. Francis of Assisi Parish in Oakville, Missouri.

Mary Ann attended the parish school, which was staffed by the Sisters of St. Joseph of Carondelet. During her intermediate grades, the family moved to her maternal aunt's farm on Ringer Road, which was close to the retirement center of the Sisters of St. Joseph. On Saturdays, the children would often take fruit, vegetables or flowers to the Sisters. Thus, Mary Ann developed a deep love and affection for the members of this community.

She began her high school education at Notre Dame High School where she met the School Sisters of Notre Dame. During her sophomore year, her father lost an eye in an accident, resulting in unemployment and surgeries. Due to the financial circumstances, she was enrolled at Mehlville Public High School. At the end of her Junior year, Mary Ann was able to get employment, which enabled her to return to Notre Dame High School.

Following graduation from high school, Mary Ann was called to the office of the Candidate Directress, Sister Paula Buchheim, SSND. During this interview, Mary Ann asserted that if she ever became a religious, it would be a Sister of St. Joseph. Leaving the office, she was convinced and knew in her heart that she would become a religious and a School Sister of Notre Dame. She entered the candidature at Sancta Maria in Ripa on August 30, 1944. She was received into the novitiate on July 29, 1946, and given the name Paul Francis. She professed first vows on July 30, 1947, and final vows on July 30, 1953. She later returned to her baptismal name.

In 1957, Sister Mary Ann earned a bachelor's degree in education from the former Notre Dame College, St. Louis, and a master's degree in education from Western Illinois University, Macomb, Illinois, in 1979.

Following profession, Sister Mary Ann taught at Most Pure Heart of Mary, Chamois, Missouri; St. Bernadette, St. Louis; Sacred Heart, Eureka, Missouri; St. Michael, Shrewsbury, Missouri and St. Boniface, Quincy, Illinois. In addition to teaching, she also had church music, choir, piano students, etc.

Sister Mary Ann had frequently volunteered to go to Japan after the mission was opened in 1948. 10 years later, this dream was realized when she left for Japan on October 12, 1958. She studied the Japanese language in Tokyo and then taught at Notre Dame Jogakuin, Kyoto, Japan, and was co-principal of Nigawa Gakuin girls's school founded by the Black Franciscan Fathers from Poland. She spent a year of study at St. Louis University in preparation for

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Birth
December 9, 1926

Baptism
December 12, 1926

Profession
July 30, 1947

Death
September 16, 2020

Burial
Sancta Maria in Ripa
Cemetery, St. Louis, Missouri

*Precious and blessed is
the death of the faithful
before God... for
they die in union with
their dear Jesus, in the
grace of God, in peace.*

Blessed Theresa of Jesus Gerhardinger
Foundress of the School Sisters of Notre Dame
Letter 11, September 10, 1831

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the opening of the All Japan Institute for the Handicapped in Yokkaichi. Due to many factors beyond her control, she only spent three months there. She completed her years in Japan teaching in an all boys' school, Nanzan Gakuen, in Nagoya.

Returning to the States in 1970, Sister Mary Ann taught at St. Dominic Savio, St. Louis; was principal at St. Francis Solanus, Quincy, Illinois; taught at St. Anthony, Effingham, Illinois and St. George, Linn, Missouri.

In 1982, she began a series of post teaching careers in St. Louis. These included maintenance administrator at Notre Hall; manager of the Webbe and Blumeyer Elderly Apartments under the auspices of Cardinal Ritter Institute; volunteer English tutor at Hosea House; administrative assistant, operations manager and volunteer coordinator at Maria Center; registrar at Cardinal Ritter College Prep; phone volunteer at the Suicide Hotline; guest hostess at Sancta Maria in Ripa; weekend housemother at Ronald McDonald House; assistant local leader at Ripa; volunteer at United Way of St. Louis working for the 100 Neediest Cases annual appeal; receptionist at Birthright of St. Louis.

Sister Mary Ann was also a program director for the Association for Independent Living, Dallas, Texas for three years. This was a training center for adult developmentally disabled men and women.

Sister Mary Ann retired at Sancta Maria in Ripa in 2012, and continued volunteer ministry at Caroline Center and the Gift Gallery. In 2017, she was missioned to Veronica House, The Sarah Community in Bridgeton, Missouri. In June 2020, she had surgery for a broken femur. Following therapy, she was transferred to Anna House. She passed away in the early morning of September 16, 2020, at Anna House, The Sarah Community, Bridgeton, Missouri.

A burial service was held at Theresa Center on September 22, 2020. Her two surviving sisters, Joan Thum and Margaret O'Fallon, family members, friends and SSNDs were present. Burial was in the Sancta Maria in Ripa cemetery. A memorial Mass will be celebrated at a later date. She was preceded in death by her parents; her sisters, Marcella Franklin and Doris Nichols; and her brother, Joseph.

Sister Mary Ann was a gentle, hospitable, strong, patient, cheerful and hard-working person. May she now experience the joy of being with her God as she is welcomed into her new life.

By Sister Carol Marie Willt, SSND