

We of Nojoshing

Nojoshing – Indian word for the area where our pioneer members settled in 1849; it means “piece of land stretching into the water.”
The name was changed later to Saint Francis, Wisconsin.



Newsletter of The New Assisi Archives of the
SISTERS of ST. FRANCIS of ASSISI, 3221 South Lake Drive, Saint Francis, WI 53235-3799

We celebrate the memory of our beloved Sister Darlene Clippert (formerly Sister James Margaret) April 21, 1932 – January 15, 2025

Sister Darlene was born in Beloit, Wis., to James and Margaret (McDonald) Clippert, the second of three daughters. When Darlene was in the third grade, she and her sisters and mother were baptized in the Catholic Church. This was the result of encouragement from her father's brother. In preparation for being baptized, they had all studied the Catechism together.

Darlene and her older sister had been attending the public grade school, but then they transferred to Brother Dutton Catholic grade school. This was a difficult year for both of them because the curriculum in the new school was more advanced and they had to learn a lot of basics to catch up to their grade level. Their sister in first grade was more fortunate.

Darlene graduated from Beloit High School in June 1950. On a trip to St. Francis Convent to visit two classmates who had entered the convent in the fall, she later wrote, “I knew that day that this is where I was meant to come.” Sister Rose Marie Brausam told Darlene that if she came before February 1, they would be in the same class. Indeed, that is what happened. Darlene entered the Sisters of St. Francis of Assisi on January 28, 1951. When she became a novice in August that year, she received the name Sister James Margaret, the first names of her parents and her first choice of three suggestions she had submitted. After Vatican Council II, she resumed her baptismal name.

On August 12, 1953, Sister Darlene professed her first vows. When Darlene had entered the community, she was asked what she would like to do and her response was that she would like to work in an orphanage. But that had to wait. She began working in domestic service at the Major Seminary and the Cardinal's residence in Chicago. At the start of her fourth year of ministry, she found herself aboard a train bound for the east coast. She was assigned to St. Coletta School in Hanover, Mass. Eleven years later, she moved to St. Coletta of Wisconsin in Jefferson to work in childcare. Finally, in 1970, Sister Darlene went to St. Joseph Children's Home in Torrington, Wyo. It was a defining year for the institution, transitioning from an orphanage to a home for disturbed children.

At first Sister Darlene worked for a year with the older boys, who proved to be a challenge. The next year she worked with the girls. This was a change after working with boys at St. Coletta. Then Sister Darlene attended Cardinal Stritch University in 1972 – 1973 and earned an associate degree in child care at the end of that academic year.

When Sister Darlene's class was in formation, they chose the motto: "*God's will knows no why.*" This was a frequent reflection for her each time there was a change in ministry.

Following her year of schooling, she worked in Milwaukee with elderly persons in their homes for several months and then responded to an invitation to work as a nursing assistant with our older Sisters at St. Ann Health Center. Even though she let it be known that she wasn't trained for this, she was encouraged to try it; and she loved working with the Sisters for the next five years.

In 1979, Sister Darlene transitioned to office work in the congregation's business office in various capacities for 11 years. Changing focus once more, Sister Darlene attended Cardinal Stritch University full time and graduated with a bachelor of arts degree in sociology in 1992.

Her ministry now evolved to being the resident trust coordinator at Marian Catholic Home for a year and then parish secretary at St. Robert Parish in Shorewood, Wis., until her retirement to Clare Hall in 2002, where she was involved in volunteer ministry. In 2019, she moved to the new St. Francis Convent.

Around 2013- 2014, the excavation of a baseball diamond on the former St. Coletta campus in Jefferson prompted staff to do some history research, and they learned that Sister Darlene had been a baseball coach during her time at St. Coletta. Growing up, Sister Darlene learned to play baseball with the boys on her street. When there weren't enough boys for a team, the girls were invited to play. She said they watched and learned by watching.

At St. Coletta, Sister Darlene had noticed that the boys spent time after school playing catch or just tossing the ball around. She got the idea to teach them baseball. Two teams were formed, and Sister Darlene was the umpire. She learned to stand back, or even behind the fence, to keep from getting bruised. The players ranged in age from 13 to adult. It took a while for them to learn the rules; but the more they played, the easier it was.

Sports were one of Sister Darlene's favorite interests, with baseball being the most favorite. Her baseball career is most unique.

Sister Darlene had been in hospice, but the call from God to enter the fullness of everlasting life still came unexpectedly at 3:00 a.m. on Wednesday, January 15, 2025. She suffered respiratory distress and although 911 was called, she was not responsive. "*God's will knows no why.*"

With Sister Darlene, let us pray:

"I desire to do your will, my God;
your law is within my heart."
But may all who seek you
rejoice and be glad in you;
may those who long for your saving help always say,
The LORD is great!"
Psalm 40; vs 8 and 16

~ Marie Colette Roy, OSF, and Marcia Lunz, OSF