

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 Janet Dielen
formerly Sister Eymard
August 11, 1935 – December 4, 2024

Sister Janet was born in South Milwaukee, Wis., to Peter and Marie (Prekop) Dielen. She was the first girl of three in the family. She and her sisters, Nancy Dielen Dinauer and Sister Rose Marie, grew up in South Milwaukee, Wis. They attended St. Mary Parish grade school. Janet attended South Milwaukee high school through her junior year and St. Mary's Academy her senior year as an aspirant in our congregation, The Sisters of St. Francis of Assisi.

In the fall of 1953, Janet became a postulant and began her studies for a degree in music. At reception into the novitiate on August 11, 1954, she received the name Sister Mary Eymard. After Vatican Council II, she resumed her baptismal name. Sister Janet made her first profession in 1956 and professed final vows in 1959.

Sister Janet's professional ministry began as a music teacher and parish organist at Sacred Heart of Jesus in Saint Francis, Wis.; St. Agnes and St. Sebastian in Milwaukee; St. John in Jefferson, Wis.; Holy Apostles in New Berlin, Wis.; and St. Anthony in Sterling, Colo.

By 1962, Sister Janet had earned a bachelor's degree in piano from Cardinal Stritch University and by 1972 a master's degree in music education from Northwestern University.

In 1979, Sister Janet transitioned to full-time director of liturgy and music at Sacred Hearts of Jesus and Mary in Sun Prairie, Wis. She continued in this ministry in Colorado in Basalt, Carbondale, and Snowmass Village. In 1990, she moved to St. Mary Parish, Rifle, Colo.

Determined to broaden and deepen her knowledge of liturgy, for several summers Sister Janet went to summer school at the University of Notre Dame and earned a Certificate in Liturgical Studies in 1987. In 2000-2001, she spent a sabbatical year at the School of Applied Theology in Oakland, Calif.

Her next move was to Columbia, Pa., as the liturgist and organist for the Precious Blood Spiritual Center. She finished her life's active ministry at St. Francis Convent. In 2018, she retired and volunteered as needed. Her health became frailer in 2019, and she embraced a ministry of prayer and presence.

Growing up, Sister Janet and her sisters helped the Sisters in church. St. Mary Church was at the top of the hill from their home. Cleaning vigil lights was a major job for them, but they were disinvented to help further after going on an uninvited cleaning spree using Bon Ami to clean the statues and then polish the pews. The pews looked great when they had finished, but the parishioners stuck to the wood at Mass the next day!

The example of her parents, who nurtured a life of prayer in their home, and the example of the Sisters at St. Mary School contributed to Sister Janet's call to religious life. She was a music student of Sister Andrée Gaspard (†2018), and they talked about her being a music teacher.

When Sister Janet began her first teaching assignment, she learned that it was a multi-faceted position: private music lessons in piano, strings and organ; playing the organ for church Masses and devotions; director of the children's choir; and music specialist at the grade school. And then, because the music teacher's schedule was often viewed as more flexible, there was often the call to substitute in a classroom for a teacher who was absent unexpectedly.

Attention to detail and protocols was a hallmark of any task Sister Janet undertook. There were no half-way measures for her. For example, once when it was her turn to cook, she wanted to make a frozen dessert which called for a vanilla wafer cookie crumb crust. There were no vanilla wafers in the house, so she baked a batch of wafers and crushed them up for the crust. She took the time it required to follow the recipe and the result was delicious.

The implementation of the Second Vatican Council gave Sister Janet an opportunity to help parish communities grow in participation in, and understanding of, the liturgical and prayer life of the Church, which was very fulfilling for her. The experience of being a member of a pastoral team, accompanying RCIA candidates in their faith and soul journey, and the relationships she established in the course of working with diverse groups was very rewarding for her.

For more than 20 years, Sister Janet's health had a variety of ups and downs. Her death, however, occurred unexpectedly and quickly due to an infection. God called her into eternal life on December 4 at South Shore Hospital in Cudahy, Wis. She had been attended to professionally and lovingly by the doctors and nursing staff. Sisters Ruth Mary Costello and Marcia Lutz were with her when she just slipped away peacefully.

Sister Janet's reflection on the occasion of her 60th Jubilee of Profession in 2016 gives us an insight into her readiness to be called by God.

My brief reflection is in the form of this modified cinquain:

Woman religious
Graced, journeyed
Listens, embodies, gives
All is gift and blessing.
God's beloved.

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