

We of Nojoshing

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



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SISTERS of ST. FRANCIS of ASSISI, 3221 South Lake Drive, St. Francis, WI 53235-3799

We celebrate the memory of our beloved Sister Kathleen (Clara) Nuebel May 17, 1907 — September 12, 2008

Clara Nuebel was born in Parkston, S.D., the fifth child of John and Anna Katherine (Bollersch) Nuebel. She grew up on a large farm with seven sisters and two brothers. Sisters Mariella Boehmer and Carol Mechtenberg are her nieces. She attended Sacred Heart School in Parkston as a boarder, “living alongside our Sisters.” Her mother loved the Sisters, and so did Clara, who entered on June 22, 1923. “I was very homesick at first, and I took all the rules and customs seriously,” she remembered. When Clara became a novice on August 12, 1924, she received the name Sister M. Kathleen.

Sister Kathleen professed vows on August 12, 1926. She taught primary grades in Stockbridge and Park Falls, Wis., for four years. Then she responded to a letter from Mother Celestine, indicating that she would like to do general work rather than teach. Although the appointment was intended to be temporary, her assignment to St. Francis Major Seminary lasted 16 years. During that time, she served in the dining room, the laundry, and the sacristy. “I really got to like it!” she said of the seminary, mentioning the spiritual benefits.

Then she was appointed the local superior at the bishop’s residence in Superior, Wis. Bishop Albert G. Meyer said, “Sister Kathleen ‘learned’ on me,” meaning that she learned how to serve in a bishop’s house. After a term of six years, she transferred to the bishop’s residence in Madison, Wis., with Bishop O’Connor. In 1954, Sister Kathleen moved to Milwaukee and took care of Archbishop Meyer’s invalid father. Five years later, she was assigned to De Sales Minor Seminary, a place she found inconvenient, with no dishwasher. She was there only one year, however, before being transferred to the Cardinal’s residence in Chicago. She had a deep devotion to Cardinal Meyer, and had many cards and letters from him. Her last mission was De Sales Prep Seminary, Milwaukee, where she served from 1965-1982.

As she reflected on her life, Sister Kathleen frequently exclaimed, “I was so scared!” in reference to unfamiliar work, a stern-looking superior, and other realities. But her solution was always to pray that she could fulfill God’s will for her. She wrote voluminous notes and reflections on every retreat, evidence that she was serious about her spiritual life. She found energy and inspiration in meditation, Mass, and daily rosary. She believed in exercising daily, keeping happy, never holding a grudge, and eating well, especially a good breakfast.

Sister Kathleen resided at our former St. Ann Health Center from August 1982 to January 1991, when she became a member of St. Francis Community at the Motherhouse. She celebrated the 80th anniversary of her profession in 2006, the only surviving member of her class. Changing health needs brought her to Marian Franciscan Center in April 2003, at age 95.

Sister Kathleen died Friday, September 12, with a half-smile on her face. A prayer for the Seven Joys of Mary admirably expresses Sister Kathleen’s philosophy: “God of all goodness, you gave us a model to follow in Mary, our mother. We ask you to help us to find joy in our daily lives and to spread that joy everywhere.”

~ Marie Colette Roy, OSF