

Sister Mary Monica Kutch, CSA

Sister Mary Monica (Frances) Kutch, CSA, 95, died early Thursday morning, December 30, 2010, in St. Francis Home where she resided.

Francis and Mary Howerton Kutch lived in the small southern Indiana town of Clinton when their first child Frances was born on August 17, 1915. She would be joined in time by eleven other siblings, seven boys and four girls. The family moved to Michigan City, Indiana, when Frances was eleven, where the father found work in the steel mills of nearby Gary. Although one of the five girls died as an infant, the other children grew up in a devoutly Catholic family. They attended St. Mary's School from first grade through high school (now Marquette High). Although Frances became familiar with the School Sisters of Notre Dame, her grade school teachers, and the Sisters of the Holy Cross who served in the area, she was drawn to enter the Congregation of Sisters of St. Agnes through the example of a classmate who had followed an aunt of hers in the Fond du Lac community.



Frances entered the convent in 1934 and three years later professed her first vows of poverty, chastity and obedience as Sister Mary Monica. Her broad and lifelong education included a Bachelor of Arts degree with a history major and art minor from Fort Hays State in Hays, Kansas; a Masters Degree in American and European History from DePaul University in Chicago; further studies in special issues of social studies, a variety of religious studies, Scripture and Psychology, care of the elderly, and a certificate in legal assistance as a tax aide for the elderly.

From 1937 to 1955 Sister Mary Monica taught primary and middle grades; then became a social studies teacher in high schools until 1973. She continued as an educator in religious education, parish ministry, and ministry to the aging from 1973 to 1984. As she moved toward retirement, she offered her services as a business office assistant at Marian College, a receptionist at Nazareth Heights, and an office assistant for the bereavement ministry at Hospice Hope. Her various ministries took her to Wisconsin, New York, Kansas, and Arizona. Sister Mary Monica saw to it that she had the education or training to do whatever it took to help those she served. At the age of 64 she trained to become a tax aide to help elderly citizens of northwestern Kansas to fill out their tax forms and at 65 she got her driver's license.

All her life Sister Mary Monica was an avid reader with a wide variety of interests. She was keenly interested in the news, not only what was happening but why. In her retirement years she spent time developing her artistic side. Her art work was often a prayer. She especially loved nature as a reflection of the Creator. She played the piano and organ as an "amateur," she would say. Her last weeks were weeks of suffering and of longing for the full vision of the One who is Beauty and Goodness and Truth. Early Thursday morning her wishes were granted as she entered into eternal peace.

Sister Mary Monica is survived by two sisters: Dolores (Chester) Cieslak of Griffith, Indiana, and Ruth (Lawrence) Wilcox of Indianapolis, Indiana; and three brothers: Gerald (Joann) of Valparaiso, Indiana; Kenneth (Marlene) of Rialto, California; and Norman (Marye) of Costa Mesa, California; nephews and nieces; and the Sisters of St. Agnes with whom she lived, prayed, and ministered.

Preceding her in death were her parents, Francis and Mary Howerton Kutch; four brothers: Paul, Bernard, Glen and Jerome; and two sisters: Barbara, who died as an infant, and Virginia Lange.

Visitation: Visitation for Sister Mary Monica will be held on Monday, January 3, 2011, from 10:00 a.m. to 1:15 p.m. at Nazareth Court and Center, 375 Gillett Street, Fond du Lac. A prayer service will be held at 11:00 a.m..

Services: A Mass of Christian Burial will be celebrated on Monday, January 3 at 1:30 p.m. in the St. Francis Home Chapel, 33 Everett Street, Fond du Lac. Father Peter Kutch, OFM Cap will preside. Burial will follow at St. Joseph Springs Cemetery, weather permitting.

Memorials may be directed to the Sisters of St. Agnes Development Office, 320 County Road K, Fond du Lac, WI 54937.

The Sisters of St. Agnes are grateful to the nurses and staff of St. Francis Home and of Nazareth Court and Center for their care of Sister Mary Monica in her retirement years and to the staff of Hospice Hope for their support in these last weeks.

Zacherl Funeral Home is serving the Sisters of the Congregation of St. Agnes.