

Sister Nancy Derhammer, CSA

Sister Nancy Derhammer, CSA, died peacefully September 25, 2022, at St. Francis Home, Fond du Lac, Wisconsin.

Nancy was born in Battle Creek, Michigan, on May 7, 1938, the daughter of Burton Dale Derhammer, Sr., and Lola Frances Howlett Derhammer. Her family moved to Beloit, Wisconsin, where Nancy grew up with her brother and the foster children her parents cared for until they found a permanent home. Nancy graduated from Beloit Memorial High School in 1956. She first entered St. Agnes Convent in August of 1961 and left as a Junior Novice in 1963. She taught special education students in Decatur, Indiana, before reentering St. Agnes Convent in 1970. She made her first profession of vows in the Congregation of Sisters of St. Agnes on June 13, 1973, in Fond du Lac, Wisconsin.



Sister Nancy earned a BS in Elementary Education from Marian College, Fond du Lac, Wisconsin, in 1968 and an MS in Special Education from St. Francis College, Ft. Wayne, Indiana, in 1973. Throughout her years in active ministry, Sister served as an educator, pastoral minister, and case worker in schools, parishes, and mental health agencies in Wisconsin, Indiana, New York, and Pennsylvania. She was an excellent teacher who could easily handle any classroom situation and who was loved by her students, especially the boys. Sister Nancy had a special love for music and could play the piano, organ, guitar and the cornet, her favorite musical instrument. She enjoyed her years as a music teacher in Our Lady Queen of Angels School in East Harlem, New York, and Guardian Angels School in Lower Manhattan, New York.

From 2002 – 2012, Sister Nancy lived with her CSA sisters in Nanty-Glo, Pennsylvania, while volunteering as a pastoral minister at St. Mary's Parish in Nanty-Glo and working for a brief time as a mental health case worker in the Mental Health/Intellectual Disabilities Agency of Cambria County, Pennsylvania.

One of Sister Nancy's greatest joys was her foster sister, Jessica (Jesse), who was born with Down Syndrome and cared for by the Derhammer family until the death of Sister Nancy's parents. At that time, Jesse was placed under the care of a state appointed guardian; however, Sister Nancy remained close to Jesse. Anyone who knew Sister Nancy knew about Jesse and their love for each other. Even as distance often separated them, Sister was devoted to Jesse, took her on many trips, invited her to spend time in her local living sites and kept a close relationship with her caregivers. She made sure Jesse was receiving the love and attention needed to address her needs and to help her experience a family who cared for her.

In July of 2012 health concerns led Sister Nancy to join the community of sisters at Nazareth Court and Center in Fond du Lac. Following knee replacement surgery in March of 2019, Sister was admitted to St. Francis Home where she was cared for until the time of her death. She is fondly remembered by the sisters and staff alike for her kindness and thoughtfulness, her keen mind, and ability to converse with anyone on a variety of topics. She loved to dabble in genealogy, poetry, and sports. She always had a jigsaw puzzle close by and could often be found with one of the nursing staff helping her place the final pieces.

Preceding Sister Nancy in death were her parents and her brother, Burton Dale Derhammer, Jr. Sister is survived by her beloved foster sister, Jessica Alexander, and Jessica's caretaker, Susan Tilton, and the Sisters of St. Agnes, with whom she lived, prayed and ministered.

Honoring Sister Nancy's wishes, green burial has taken place at St. Joseph Springs Cemetery, Fond du Lac, Wisconsin. Visitation will be held at Nazareth Court and Center, 375 Gillett Street, Fond du Lac, WI from 10:00 – 11:00 a.m. and from 12:00 -1:30 p.m. on Tuesday, October 18, 2022.

A prayer service will be held at 11:00 a.m. on Tuesday, October 18, 2022, in the Nazareth Center Chapel. Please check in for the Visitation and Prayer Service at the 375 Gillett Street entrance only.

A Memorial Mass for Sister Nancy will be held Tuesday, October 18, 2022, at 2:00 p.m. in St. Francis Home Chapel, 33 Everett Street, Fond du Lac, Wisconsin, with Tom Zelinski, OFM Cap., presiding.

Memorials may be directed to the CSA Mission Advancement Office, 320 County Road K, Fond du Lac, WI 54937.

The Sisters of St. Agnes are grateful to the nurses and staff of Nazareth Court and Center, St. Francis Home, and Hospice Hope for their care of Sister Nancy.

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