

## **Sister Mary Louise Pfannenstiel, CSA**

Sister Mary Louise Pfannenstiel, CSA, formerly known as Sister Theodore, died unexpectedly and peacefully February 1, 2022, at St. Agnes Hospital, Fond du Lac, WI.

Mary Louise was born in Hays, KS, on September 20, 1937, the daughter of Theodore L. Pfannenstiel and Basilia Wittman Pfannenstiel. Shortly after her birth, her parents moved with Mary Louise to a family farm in Plainville, KS, where she spent her childhood. Her mother died when she was ten years old, leaving Mary Louise to be raised by her father, her grandmother, and her aunts. In September of 1951, Mary Louise

entered St. Agnes Convent in Fond du Lac, WI, and attended St. Agnes High School. She made her profession of vows in the Congregation of Sisters of St. Agnes as Sister Theodore on August 15, 1956.

Sister Mary Louise received a BS in Elementary Education from Marian College, Fond du Lac, WI, an MS in Elementary Education from St. Francis College, Ft. Wayne, IN, and a Certificate in Library Science from Marian College of Fond du Lac. An avid learner and lover of books, she also earned several additional credits throughout her years in active ministry in religious studies, children's literature, the teaching of reading, and building school libraries. From 1958 – 1972, she was a primary grade teacher at St. Florian School, Milwaukee, WI; St. John the Baptist School, New Haven, IN; St. Joseph School, Decatur, IN. Beginning in 1972, she served as a learning center coordinator and librarian at St. Nicholas School, Evanston, IL; Brother Dutton School, Beloit, WI; and Sacred Heart School, Colby, KS. Sister Mary Louise returned to her birthplace, Hays, KS, in 1989 to care for her father and to volunteer as a primary teacher aide, library assistant, childcare provider, and foster grandparent at St. Joseph School in Hays, now known as Holy Family Elementary School. After her father's death in 1998, she remained in Hays to continue her volunteer service until joining the community of CSA sisters at Nazareth Court and Center in Fond du Lac in October 2013.

Sister Mary Louise will be remembered for her creative efforts to share with children her love for reading and literature. While deeply proud of her Kansas roots, she loved to travel and visit historical sites across the country often riding for days on a bus to reach her destination. Gifted with a brilliant mind, an inquisitive spirit, and a heart for the poor, she was unwavering in her determination to remain actively engaged in the life and mission of



her CSA community even as her increasing physical limitations made travel and group participation more difficult. She kept her resolve to live life fully—up to the moment of her unexpected death.

Sister Mary Louise was preceded in death by her parents, her infant sister Joan Catherine, her stepmother Pauline Leiker Pfannenstiel, and her aunts Sister Mary Bridget Wittman, CSA, and Sister Audrey Pfannenstiel, CSA.

She is survived by her aunt, Mildred Walters; her cousins; and the Sisters of St. Agnes, with whom she lived, prayed and ministered.

Visitation will be held on Thursday, February 10, 2022, from 9 –11:00 a.m. and from 12:00 -1:30 p.m. at Nazareth Court and Center, 375 Gillett Street, Fond du Lac, WI. A Prayer Service will be held at 11:00 a.m. in Nazareth Center Chapel. Please check in for the Visitation and Prayer Service at the 375 Gillett Street entrance only.

A Mass of Christian Burial for Sister Mary Louise will be offered on Thursday, February 10, 2022, at 2:00 p.m. in St. Francis Home Chapel, 33 Everett Street, Fond du Lac, WI, with Father Larry Abler, Capuchin, presiding. Burial will follow at St. Joseph Springs Cemetery, Fond du Lac, WI.

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 and St. Agnes Hospital for their care of Sister Mary Louise.

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

