

Sister Kathleen Ries, CSA

Sister Kathleen Ries, formerly Sister Eugenio, died peacefully May 4, 2025, at St. Francis Home, Fond du Lac, Wisconsin.

Kathleen was born April 28, 1941, in Sheboygan, Wisconsin, to Leo and Anne Gilipsky Ries. Her father was a mink rancher. Kathleen, her five brothers, and her sister share many memories of what they learned about life doing daily chores with their dad. Kathleen attended St. Peter Claver Grade School in Sheboygan staffed by the Sisters of St. Agnes. After spending her freshman year at St. Mary's Academy in St. Francis, Wisconsin, she made the decision to enter St. Agnes Convent, graduating from St. Agnes High School in 1958. She continued in formation for religious life and made her first profession of vows in the Congregation of Sisters of St. Agnes as Sister Eugenio on August 15, 1960, in Fond du Lac, Wisconsin.



Sister Kathleen was truly grateful for the variety of places she lived, the people who became part of her life, her ministry experiences among diverse cultures, and the support of her family. She spent her life as an educator and as an advocate for social justice and ecological issues in various settings. She earned her BS in Elementary Education and Social Studies from Marian College, Fond du Lac, Wisconsin, and her MA in Education from Marygrove College, Detroit, Michigan. She was a lifelong learner earning additional credits in education, community organizing, theology, and clinical pastoral education throughout her years in active ministry.

Sister was an elementary school teacher and principal in parish schools in Wisconsin, New York, Indiana, and Mississippi from 1961 – 1994. After a year of sabbatical, she worked for three years in church-based community organizing in Southern Louisiana. She then offered a year of service assisting at the CSA motherhouse in Fond du Lac. Moving to Milwaukee, Wisconsin, she served as director of the St. Rose After School Program, taught and directed ESL classes for the Milwaukee Achiever Program, and worked as an administrative assistant at Marquette University.

Responding to the needs of Native American students, she served as principal of St. Michael Indian High School, St. Michaels, Arizona, from 2003 – 2006. From Arizona, Sister Kathleen moved to The Leo House in New York City where she served initially as the bookkeeper and later as the minister of hospitality for this Catholic guest house in the heart of the city. During this time, she became the CSA representative for UNANIMA International, a United Nations Non-Governmental Organization, formed by a coalition of seventeen congregations of women religious that advocated against the trafficking of women and children, addressed the needs of the world's poor, the effects of climate change, and peacemaking. As president of the board of UNANIMA, she attended a world summit in Rio de Janeiro in 2012 focused on issues of sustainability and the eradication of poverty.

Sister's final years in active ministry (2015-2018) were spent at Sojourner Truth House in Gary, Indiana, where she helped serve the needs of individuals and families experiencing homelessness, hunger, and economic hardship.

Sister Kathleen began experiencing serious health issues and returned to Fond du Lac to receive care, living at the CSA motherhouse until moving to Nazareth Court and Center in March 2020. As her health became more fragile, she was placed in the care of the St. Francis Home staff who provided lovingly for her until the time of her death. Those who cared for her remember her kindness. Often, despite her own suffering, she could be seen holding a hand and offering comfort to another resident having a difficult time. Her heart for those in need remained strong to the end.

Preceding Sister in death were her parents and her brother Father Robert Ries.

Sister is survived by her sister Cedar (Susan) McGrath, her brothers James (Lynn) Ries, John (Paula) Ries, Charles (Leslie Lederer) Ries and Leo Joseph (Marie Kingsbury) Ries, beloved nieces and nephews, and the Sisters of St. Agnes with whom she lived, prayed, and ministered.

Cremation has taken place.

All services for Sister Kathleen will be held on Thursday, June 5, 2025.

Visitation will be held from 9:00 a.m. – 11:00 a.m. and 12:00 – 1:30 p.m. at Nazareth Court and Center, 375 Gillett Street, Fond du Lac, Wisconsin.

A Prayer Service will be held at 11:00 a.m. in Nazareth Center Chapel, 375 Gillett Street, Fond du Lac, Wisconsin.

The Liturgy of Christian Burial will be offered at 2:00 p.m. in St. Francis Home Chapel, 33 Everett Street, Fond du Lac, Wisconsin, with Father Carl Diederichs presiding.

Burial of cremains will follow in St. Joseph Springs Cemetery, Fond du Lac, Wisconsin.

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

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

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