

Sister Francis Assisi Pielmeier, CSA

Sister Francis Assisi, CSA, Catherine Helen Pielmeier, died peacefully October 25, 2017, at Nazareth Center, Fond du Lac, Wisconsin.

Catherine Pielmeier was born in Altoona, Pennsylvania, on January 28, 1919, to Joseph George Pielmeier and Frances Steinbeiser Pielmeier. She was one of six children including one boy and five girls. She attended one year of high school in Altoona, then entered St. Agnes Convent, Fond du Lac, in 1934; she received her diploma from St. Agnes High School.

Sister Francis Assisi made her first profession of vows in the Congregation of Sisters of St. Agnes on August 15, 1938. She received a BS in Education from Marian College of Fond du Lac in 1944. Sister furthered her education at Catholic University of America, Washington, DC, earning an MA in Education and Psychology in 1946, and a PhD in Education in 1950. She received a Professional Catechist Certificate from the Archdiocese of Mobile, Alabama, in 1990.



Sister taught for five years at St. Mary's Grade School in Fond du Lac, Wisconsin, prior to pursuing graduate studies. Beginning in 1948, Sister Francis Assisi devoted thirty years to leadership in teacher education at Marian College. She was a professor of education, director of teacher education and supervisor of student teaching. While instructing aspiring teachers in courses such as elementary curriculum, methodology, children's literature, and educational psychology, she encouraged and inspired them to develop the art of education through their professional roles. She valued creativity, literature and the arts in the curriculum. She wrote a children's fiction story; was the author of a history textbook and an editor for a textbook company; and for eight years, contributed poetry, stories and a weekly column to a publication for primary students. She initiated a Catholic Young Writers' Club for elementary students in the early 1950s.

Sister Francis Assisi was involved in civic community action programs as a board member of the Fond du Lac Area Economic Opportunity Committee, Inc.; she was a founding member when the Economic Opportunity Office became ADVOCAP, Inc. Sister was elected president of the 33-member ADVOCAP board of directors in 1971 and again in 1973.

Sister served as a general council member for the congregation from 1969-1973.

In 1978, Sister turned her focus to leadership in religious education. She worked for one year in St. Augustine Parish, Tucson, Arizona, then accepted the position of Consultant for Religious Education in the schools and parish catechetical programs of the Diocese of Joliet, IL., for six years. From 1986-1998, she continued a similar ministry as Associate Director of Religious Education for the Montgomery Deanery, in the Diocese of Mobile, Alabama. She continued to reside in Montgomery and served as she could in various religious formation programs of St. Jude Parish in the City of St. Jude before retiring to Nazareth Center in 2004.

Sister Francis Assisi was preceded in death by her parents Joseph Pielmeier and Frances Steinbeiser Pielmeier; her brother Joseph; and sisters Frances, Rita Samarzija, Rosemarie Gerhart, and Clara Karl. Sister is survived by her nieces and nephews and the Sisters of St. Agnes, with whom she lived, prayed and ministered.

Visitation for Sister Francis Assisi will be on November 3, 2017, beginning at 9:00 a.m. in Nazareth Court and Center, 375 Gillett Street, Fond du Lac, Wisconsin. A prayer service will be held at 11:00 a.m. in the Center Chapel.

A Mass of Christian Burial will be on November 3, 2017, at 2:00 p.m. in St. Francis Home Chapel, 33 Everett Street, Fond du Lac, Wisconsin. Father Ken Smits, Capuchin, will be the presider. Burial will follow at St. Joseph Springs Cemetery.

Memorials can 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 staffs of Nazareth Court and Center and Hospice Hope for their care of Sister Francis Assisi in her last years.

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