

Sister Maureen Murphy
July 13, 1931 – June 21, 2022

Catherine Benedicta was born on the family farm in Stuart, Nebraska on July 13, 1931, to Jeremiah Patrick Murphy and Sophia Theresa (Kaup)Murphy. Catherine was baptized July 19, 1931 and confirmed June 4, 1946 at St. Boniface Catholic Church in Stuart, Nebraska.

Catherine was one of twelve children. She attended the first eight grades at St. Boniface School, a rural school in Stuart, Nebraska, and high school at St. Mary's Academy in O'Neill, Nebraska.

On September 8, 1950, Catherine entered the Sisters of St Francis of Penance and Christian Charity in Denver, Colorado. She made Temporary Vows on August 15, 1953 and received the name Sr. Maureen. Two years later she made Final Vows.

Catherine received a certificate to teach in Normal School in Nebraska. She taught one year in a rural school before she entered the novitiate. After being received she taught at St. Mary's Academy in O'Neill, Nebraska, St. Elizabeth's in Denver, Colorado, and Immaculate Conception in Rushville, Nebraska. Sr. Maureen continued her academic preparation for teaching. In 1959 she earned her Bachelor's Degree from Regis College in Denver, Colorado. In 1965, she received her Master's Degree in Theology from St. Francis College in Joliet, Illinois. Sr. Maureen attended college in Nebraska and obtained a Certificate in Elementary Education.

She taught in elementary schools--in Colorado at Guardian Angels in Denver and in Nebraska at St. Agnes in Scottsbluff, St. Agnes Academy in Alliance, and St. Mary's Academy in O'Neill. Sr. Maureen also taught at the International School in Rome, Italy.

Sr. Maureen was the second elementary principal at St. Agnes in Scottsbluff, Nebraska, and the first elementary principal at Holy Rosary Mission in Pine Ridge, South Dakota.

After 26 years in the classroom, Sr. Maureen retired from teaching and became interested in Pastoral Care Ministry. She was instrumental in establishing Pastoral Care Programs and teams at both St. Joseph's Hospital in Minot, North Dakota and St. Joseph's Hospital in Alliance, Nebraska. During her six years as a Pastoral Minister, she also ministered to the people at St. Anthony's Hospital in O'Neill, Nebraska.

Sr. Maureen worked in Manderson, South Dakota, on the Pine Ridge Reservation, at our foster home for the Lakota Children. She ministered as a cook, gardener, sacristan, and in various other ministries for the Sisters at Marian Residence in Alliance, Nebraska and at Queen of Peace Oratory in Denver, Colorado. Sr. Maureen cared for the elderly in their homes in Denver.

In 2016, Sr. Maureen retired and moved to Marian Residence in Alliance, Nebraska. Sr. Maureen stayed busy helping where she was needed.

When Marian Residence closed in May 2022, she moved to Highland Park Care Center in Alliance, Nebraska. Sr. Maureen had hyponatremia and for a number of years her health had slowly been declining. After she was in an out of the hospital repeatedly in May, she went on palliative care and remained in the hospital. Her brother, Jim Murphy, and sister, Jane LaHood, Sr. Jane Schneider, and Theresa Dykes (Holy Rosary Parish Pastoral Minister and a Franciscan Associate) were with Sr. Maureen when she died peacefully on June 21.

The wake, reception, funeral, and meal were held at Holy Rosary Catholic Church in Alliance, Nebraska. Many family members came for the wake and funeral. Srs. Sarah Manchester, Liz Fuhr, Sue Artone-Fricke, and Patty Podhaisky came from Denver, Colorado for the celebrations of Sr. Maureen's life. Sr. Rita Cammack, General Minister, came for the funeral mass as she was in Denver to visit and preside at the Sacred Heart Province Chapter. Srs. Joan Linenbrink and Jane Schneider, some of the staff that worked at Marian Residence, friends, Associates and parishioners attended the rosary and the mass. On June 29, 2022, Fr. Matt Koperski led the rosary; afterwards there was sharing of stories and memories of Sr. Maureen. The mass celebrating Sr. Maureen's life was at 10:00 a.m. on June 30 with Fr. Matt Koperski as principle celebrant and Fr. Tim Stone and Fr. Steve Deaver concelebrating. Sr. Maureen was buried at Calvary Cemetery in Alliance, Nebraska.

Sisters of St Francis of Penance and Christian Charity, Marian Community