

Name: Sister Marion Gillis (Sister LaSalette)
Date of Birth: September 30, 1930
Place of Birth: Green Bay, Wisconsin
Parents: Albert and Lillian (DeBoth) Gillis
Religious Profession: August 15, 1954
Date of Death: January 15, 2019
Age: 88 years old
Years Professed: 64 years



Wake Reflection by Sister Adrianna Schouten, First Councilor

Marion Mary Gillis was born on September 30, 1930 to Albert and Lillian (DeBoth) Gillis. Marion was the middle child of five, with two older brothers and a younger brother and sister. She was baptized at St. Joseph Church in Green Bay, Wisconsin by Reverend A.J. Schueller on October 12, 1930.

The first three of years of school began at Chappell School about a mile from their home. For the remaining grade school years they attended the newly built St. Joseph School which had 8 grades and 8 Franciscan Sisters of Christian Charity. Marion attended St. Joseph Academy where she was taught by the Sisters of St. Joseph of Carondelet. After graduation in 1948, Marion worked for the Green Bay Food Company as a comptroller.

In a letter to Mother Edna, dated April 24, 1952 Marion wrote

“I can’t quite make up my mind if I want to be nurse or enter the convent...I have been working since I left high school. I am now 21 years of age... I am now hoping very soon to get some sign from God as to what my vocations is to be... If I meet the needed qualification I would like to give the convent life a try.”
Very Truly Yours, Marion Gillis.

In a letter from Sister Mary Ellen, Mistress of Postulants date April 29, 1952, Sister wrote

“You mentioned that you wondered whether to become a nurse or enter a convent. We have a suggestion – why don’t you do both...If you have the necessary qualification you will most likely be permitted to follow the nursing profession. Of course in religious life the will of God is made known to us by our Superiors... You will discover that your happiness will be a result of their choices.”

Sister Marion entered Holy Family Convent on August 23, 1952. She was received on June 13, 1953 and was given the name Sister LaSalette. She returned to her baptismal name in the late 1960’s.

Sister Marion attended Holy Family College. She taught grades 1-6 from 1955 – 1960. She entered the Good Samaritan Hospital School of Nursing and graduated from there in 1963. From

St. Louis University she earned a Bachelor of Science in Nursing in 1967. She earned a Master of Science in Nursing from University of Texas in Austin in 1973.

With her background in both teaching and nursing, Sister Marion was an instructor, supervisor, director of education, in-service teacher and director. Sister Marion developed the Associate Degree in Nursing program for the Lakeshore Technical Institute.

At the request of Sister Ruth, the local director at the Motherhouse, Sister Marian took blood pressure readings for the Sisters and thus began the Holy Family Clinic. Sister served as a helper as needed at St. Paul's Manor and at St. Francis Convent.

Sister Marion was a member of the Prayer Apostolate with special prayers for Initial Formation and Vocation/Initial Formation personnel.

Baking, cooking, making wild weed bouquets, playing cards and working with drift wood were special talents and hobbies she had.

Because of health issues, Sister came to St. Rita Health Center in 2015. A very special day in 2016 was September 26. Sister was a beneficiary of the estate of her brother Father Ralph Gillis. She generously chose to contribute her inheritance to the Silver Lake College of the Holy Family Nursing program. Her gift was an endowed Scholarship for nursing students.

In Sister Marion's words

“I must never forget that it was God who called and chose me and not I who chose Him and a special career”

God bless you, Sister Marion for your faithfulness and dedication to the needs of others.

Eternal rest grant unto Sister Marion, may she rest in peace.