Wake Reflection by Sister Natalie Binversie, Community Director

Marilyn Jean Morin was born in Marquette, Michigan on June 26, 1931 to Joseph and Aldia (Racine) Morin. She was the third of four children. Marilyn had two older sisters, Sister Pavel who entered the Community one year after Marilyn did, and Pat. They would eventually have a younger brother, Paul. Because of French influence, Marilyn was baptized Marilina Johanna on July 5, 1931 at St. John’s Church in Marquette, Michigan. She was confirmed at St. John’s on June 13, 1943.

Marilyn attended St. John’s Elementary School for eight years and was taught by the Ursuline Sisters. It was in seventh or eighth grade that Marilyn sensed that God was calling her to be Sister. The Ursuline Sisters were moving back to Canada after her eighth grade was completed and she asked her mother if she could join them. Marilyn, who had not done any traveling, was told that it was too far for her to go. Her mother suggested that she go to a couple of years of High School. After that, she was free to join them, if she still wanted to.

After the Ursuline Sisters left, the Franciscan Sisters of Christian Charity came to teach at St. John the Baptist School. Marilyn had the practice of attending the Sorrowful Mother Novena on Friday nights. This is where she would meet the Franciscan Sisters. She was especially drawn to Sister St. Francis Wenzel, who was patient, friendly, pleasant and helpful. Marilyn prayed a lot throughout her High School years to know what God wanted her to be and to do. After she graduated from Graveraet High School in 1949, she worked one year as a clerk.

She still desired to be a Sister, however, now it was to join the Franciscan Sisters of Christian Charity from Manitowoc, Wisconsin, not the Ursuline Sisters in Canada. Marilyn wrote the following letter to Mother Edna, dated April 20, 1950.

Dear Reverend Mother Edna,

I am interested in your order, the Sisters of Saint Francis, and would like to know if there are any special requirements to enter. If possible, I would like to enter this fall. Could you please send the necessary information?

Sincerely yours,

Marilyn Morin
As part of the application process her Pastor wrote the following letter of recommendation dated August 15, 1950:

To Whom It May Concern:

I write these few lines in behalf of Miss Marilyn Morin. Marilyn is one of my parishioners. I first became acquainted with her six years ago, when she was a pupil at St. John’s School. I feel that Marilyn is a fine prospect to enter the religious life. She has shown herself to be devout in prayer and in the reception of the Sacraments. For many months now, she has been at Mass daily and has been a daily Communicant. She impresses me as being a girl of much virtue. Therefore, I recommend her as a candidate for the religious Life.

Sincerely in Christ,
Rev. Raymond J. Garin, Administrator

When Marilyn told her Dad that she was accepted he told her that she would be back home in two weeks! Marilyn entered Holy Family Convent on August 19, 1950 and we are grateful that she did stay, well beyond two weeks! At the time of her Reception into the Novitiate, June 13, 1951, she received the name, Sister Bonita, which means “pretty” in Spanish and “good” in Italian. Marilyn had a deep love for Our Blessed Mother, so she was pleased that the name fit her devotion. She desired to deepen her relationship with Mary in order to grow in goodness and purity.

Sister Bonita enjoyed 13 years of teaching third and second graders in Waukesha, Appleton, Green Bay, Kiel and Kaukauna. After this, her skills were needed at St. Joseph’s Home in West Point to help with the residents. In 1967 Sister Bonita moved back to Wisconsin to be a bookkeeper at Ozanam Home and help with Maintenance. For 12 years she was a driver and helped wherever there was a need. It was during this time that Sister Bonita earned Continuing Education units in the “Tender Loving Car Care” course. Sister Bonita attended The Waukesha County Technical Institute for a “Basic Food Preparation” course which helped to prepare for her ministry as a Homemaker in Kaukauna and Manitowoc.

Sister Bonita enjoyed painting, weaving and knitting. She was a loyal Packer fan and thoroughly enjoyed whomever came to visit her. Sister Bonita loved her family. She was especially pleased to have recent visits with her brother, Paul, and other family members. Her quick smile and joy-filled laugh will be missed.

With the need for more care due to health decline, Sister Bonita became a resident of St. Rita Health Center in July 2019. She was always very appreciative of all that was done for her. She has been joining her suffering to Our Lord’s redemptive suffering in all of her health decline. She was faithful to praying for the Ministries of the Diocese of Marquette. We thank God for the blessing of Sister Bonita being called to be a Franciscan Sister of Christian Charity. May she intercede with us, as we continue to ask God to call young women to join our Community.

Eternal rest grant to Sister Bonita, O Lord, and let perpetual light shine on her. May she rest in peace.

Amen.