



Name: Sister Paul Mathy
Date of Birth: March 1, 1930
Place of Birth: Brussels, Wisconsin
Parents: Oliver James and Norma Agnes (LeMay) Mathy
Religious Profession: June 14, 1947
Date of Death: March 26, 2020
Age: 90
Years Professed: 72

Reflection by Sister Natalie Binversie, Community Director

Betty Jane Mathy, born on March 1, 1930, was the first of four children of Oliver James and Norma Agnes (LeMay) Mathy from Brussels, Wisconsin. She was baptized the next day, March 2nd at St. Francis Xavier Catholic Church in Brussels by the Pastor, Father J. J. Gloudemans, O'Praem. Betty Jane took the name Therese when she was confirmed at St. Therese Church in Appleton, Wisconsin on April 26, 1944.

When Betty was six months old her parents moved to Appleton, WI and became members of St. Therese Parish. Their home was next door to the Sisters' Convent where the Franciscan Sisters of Christian Charity lived. Betty attended St. Therese School and graduated from the eighth grade in June 1944. She had Sister Mary Doris as her teacher in first grade. Betty loved Sister Mary Doris because she made God's love so real. Betty wanted to return that love in serving Him and showing His love to others. This was the seed that gave birth to her vocation. Betty had family support for becoming a Sister. Her father told her that he had prayed every night of his married life, that one of his children would become a Religious.

On March 16, 1944 Betty wrote the following letter to Mother Perpetua:

Dear Mother Superior,

After finishing the eighth grade this spring, I feel I would like to pursue a religious vocation. Upon the advice of Sister M. Eva and Father Hauck, I am sending this letter for the purpose of obtaining any information which you may be kind enough to send me which would be of help in making my plans. I would also like an application blank for admission into the Holy Family Convent at Manitowoc.

Thanking you in advance for this favor, I am very sincerely yours, Betty Jane Mathy.

Mother Perpetua responded on April 3, 1944;

My dear Betty Jane,

This will acknowledge receipt of your welcome letter of recent date with reference to your vocation to the religious life. You will be interested, I am sure, to know that just at present our Candidates are making their visits home. One, Miss Ethel Mae St. Louis, will be pleased to have you call and have an interview with her. You will no doubt, find many things in common to talk over. Ethel Mae can give you her personal view and experience on the life here at Holy Family Convent.

We are pleased to enclose an application form which you may fill out and return to me. Other blanks enclosed regarding your physical health may be filled out at the convenience of your family physician and dentist. Be sure to ask your Reverend Pastor to send me a recommendation for you. Your Baptismal and Confirmation certificates are requested.

*With every prayerful wish for your greater happiness in dedicating your life and work to the service of the Divine Master and looking forward to hearing from you soon, I am, sincerely in Christ,
Mother M. Perpetua, O.S.F. Superior General.*

After a considerable amount of communication back and forth, Betty Jane was accepted to enter Holy Family Convent on August 17, 1944. Her father brought her to the Convent. Before he left he told Betty, "Always remember why you are here." On her Reception Day, June 13, 1946, Betty received the name Sister Paul.

Sister Paul completed her High School in Holy Family Academy, graduating on June 2, 1949. She continued her education at Holy Family College, earning a Bachelor of Arts Degree in 1961 with a Major in Education and a Minor in English. She taught primary grades from 1949 to 1972 in Green Bay, Oshkosh, Manitowoc, Waukesha and Chicago. In 1972 she entered the Health Care Apostolate and served at St. Joseph's Home in West Point, NE as a Geriatric Aide and Activity Coordinator. Sister Paul was missioned to St. Rita Health Center in 1976 where she served as a Nurse Assistant and then gradually took on Foot Care for the Sisters.

Sister Paul loved people, especially those in need. She made blankets and mittens for the adults and children living in Southfield Townhouses in Manitowoc. For the holidays of Christmas, Valentine's Day and Easter, Sister Paul made favors for the children and special gifts for the mothers. Because the number needed to ensure that everyone got something was quite large, Sister Paul did not hesitate to find other people to help her with these projects. When the items were delivered, the joy could not be contained in Sister Paul nor in the recipients.

Sister Paul firmly believed that in whatever she did, she was returning God's love. In a reflection Sister Paul wrote, "No matter what happens in my life, God allows it for a reason. When I discern the reason, it's another opportunity of offering my gift of love. Community living, love, support and the example of my Sisters have been the wrapping on my gift of religious life. I am grateful to my family! I am so very grateful to our Community of Franciscan Sisters of Christian Charity for accepting and educating me, but above all, for the many opportunities to grow in my life of prayer and commitment to the Lord who first loved me!"

Thank you, Sister Paul, for the witness of true Franciscan JOY! Your ready smile and enthusiasm will always be remembered. We know that Jesus, whom you loved so much, had loved you first. May you rest in peace, for your good works go before you.

Eternal rest grant to Sister Paul, O Lord, and let perpetual light shine upon her.
May she rest in peace.
Amen!