

Name: Sister Francette Riebe  
Date of Birth: December 17, 1931  
Place of Birth: Manitowoc  
Parents: Dell Walter and Sophie Leona (Tadych) Riebe  
Religious Profession: August 15, 1951  
Date of Death: November 9, 2020  
Age: 88  
Years Professed: 69



Reflection by Sister Natalie Binversie, Community Director

Carol Mae Riebe was born on December 17, 1931 in Manitowoc, Wisconsin, to Dell Walter and Sophie Leona (Tadych) Riebe. She was baptized Carol Mary at Sacred Heart Church on December 27, 1931. Carol made her First Holy Communion on May 28, 1939 and received the Sacrament of Confirmation from Bishop Bona on October 16, 1945.

Before Carol was born her parents moved into her Grandparent's home to help take care of them. There were eventually fourteen children in the Riebe family. Carol was the fourth oldest of eight boys and six girls. Four of her siblings died shortly after their birth. Carol was very close to her grandmother and often went to daily Mass with her. Carol would light a candle before Mass and watch her grandmother pray. One time she asked her grandma if she saw God and angels when she prayed. Grandma told her that she did sometimes. When Carol look disappointed and said, "I wish that I could see the angels!" Her grandma bent down and said to Carol, "Carol Mae, it is better to be an angel, than to see them!" Carol always remembered those words. They were a lesson for life!

Carol attended Sacred Heart School in Manitowoc, where she met the Franciscan Sisters of Christian Charity. After graduating in 1946 she attended Wilson Junior High for her Freshman year and Lincoln High School for her Sophomore year. Carol had thought about being a Sister for quite a while. In her Sophomore year the desire was very strong. She talked to her parents about going to the Convent and got their blessing. Carol wrote the following letter to Mother Edna dated June 8, 1948:

*Dear Mother General,*

*I am planning to enter the Holy Family Convent in August. I would like to know if I could take Latin over, as I have taken only the first year at Lincoln High School and my grades, I am sorry to say, were not my standard. I am in Grade 10. I thought that being a Nun, it would be important to know Latin well. I want to be the best I can. So, I would be very thankful if you could straighten me out on this matter. My Latin teacher thinks it best to take it over, as she said I have ability.*

*Thank you very much!*

*I remain very truly yours,  
Carol Riebe*

Carol's Pastor wrote the following letter of recommendation dated June 2, 1948:

*To Whom It May Concern*

*Carol Mary Riebe has been a member of my parish for most of her life and I have known her since 1939. She is a studious, serious girl and shows indications of a Religious vocation. I can recommend her as a worthy candidate.*

*Rev. L. M. Schorn*

Carol was accepted and entered Holy Family Convent on August 25, 1948. She completed her High School in Holy Family Academy and graduated in June 1950. On June 13, 1950 Carol was received into the Community and was given the name Sister Francette.

Sister Francette attended Holy Family College and earned a Bachelor of Arts Degree, July 28, 1964, with a Major in History and a Minor in English. Sister Francette taught grades four through eight for about twenty years in West Virginia, Arizona and Wisconsin. She then went to Fordham University in New York, New York to earn a Master of Arts Degree in Religious Education. For the next forty years Sister Francette taught Religious Studies in Wisconsin and California High Schools, the Religious Education Center in Two Rivers and Silver Lake College of the Holy Family in Wisconsin.

In a jubilee reflection she wrote, "God has blessed me with the gift of teaching whereby I can touch lives and shape minds. Teaching has become an essential aspect of 'who I am'. Being a teacher has been a profound and holy experience for me, because as a teacher, I feel, I step into a sacred space, the lives of my students." She continued, "Looking into the process of journeying and becoming who God wants me to be, I believe that God has given me many precious gifts, many angels in my life. My parents, family members and my Franciscan Sisters in Community have not only given me support and unconditional love, my friends along the way have given me stability and comfort."

After Sister Francette completed her years of teaching, she volunteered at the College and was Sponsor Presence at Holy Family Memorial in Manitowoc. She moved to St. Rita Health Center in 2016 and was a member of the Prayer Apostolate, praying for the intentions of Holy Family Conservatory.

Sister Francette was very close to her family members. She took on the role of caretaker and healer in her family after her mother, the worry angel, died. As soon as she knew something was wrong, she would worry, pray, light candles and say the Rosary.

Sister Francette, may you enjoy eternal life, free from worry, interceding for all the needs of the Franciscan Sisters of Christian Charity and your family members. Thank you for being our Sister. You loved to sing in this earthly life. Now you can sing with the Angels, praising God forever and ever!