

Name: Sister Patricia Touhey (Sister Mary Patrick)
Date of Birth: August 20, 1934
Place of Birth: Maribel, Wisconsin
Parents: Walter M. and Veronica "Verna" (Dewane) Touhey
Religious Profession: August 15, 1954
Date of Death: December 16, 2023
Age: 89
Years Professed: 69



Reflection by Sister Natalie Binversie, Community Director

Patricia Jane Touhey, the oldest of six children, was born in Maribel, Wisconsin on August 20, 1934 to Walter and Veronica "Verna" (Dewane) Touhey. She was baptized at St. Mary's Church in Stark, Wisconsin, September 2, 1934. Patricia took the name Mary when she was confirmed by Bishop Stanislaus V. Bona at St. Joseph's Church in Kellnersville, WI on April 29, 1947.

Pat grew up in the small village of Maribel. It was a caring community where everyone looked out for one another. Her parents were an example of having deep faith in God, giving service, living Christian values and doing for others. Her Dad was postmaster and an insurance agent. Her mother was a teacher. Both her Dad and her Mom were active in leadership roles in the village. Along with daily prayer, there were two non-negotiable standards in the Touhey home. One was drinking milk and the other was attending Catholic School.

The family belonged to St. Mary Parish in Stark, however, when the children were old enough for school, the family joined St. Joseph Parish in Kellnersville to attend the Catholic School. Pat's Dad would not give up his membership in the Irish Parish in Stark, so they belonged to two parishes. The Franciscan Sisters of Christian Charity staffed St. Joseph's School. The Sisters met the needs of the students to help them learn to the best of their ability. Pat was especially fond of Sister Patricia Ann Walsh and Sister Martina Van Ryzin. Because of the non-negotiables set early on, Pat and her sisters attended high school in Green Bay at St. Joseph Academy and their brothers went to St. Norbert High School in Green Bay.

Pat's desire to be a Sister was with her as a young child. It was when she attended a retreat, in her Junior Year of high school, that she began to think seriously about her future. The Passionist priest had said, "If you have average intelligence and reasonably good health, you might want to consider Religious Life." That statement renewed her desire to enter the Convent and led her to be more attentive to prayer. When she told her Mother that she wanted to be a Sister, her Mom shared that she also had that desire, however, her parents died young and she, being the second oldest of ten children, knew her responsibilities were to help raise her siblings. When

she asked her Dad about going to the Convent, he responded with his Irish teasing. His response was, "Well, that shouldn't hurt you any!" Both her Mom and Dad gave Pat their blessing.

Pat wrote the Following letter dated May 17, 1952:

Dear Sister,

I would like to enter the Holy Family Convent this fall. I am a Senior in high school at St. Joseph's Academy in Green Bay. Please send me the necessary information.

Sincerely,

Patricia Touhey

The following letter of recommendation, from her Pastor, was sent on August 29, 1952:

Holy Family Convent

Manitowoc, WI

It pleases me beyond expression to be asked for a Pastor's Recommendation for Patricia Touhey, who entered the convent recently. I am sure you find in Patricia a good girl whose character and habits will develop with her vocation as a bride of Christ.

Sincerely in Christ Jesus,

Rev. Frank Svatek

As was mentioned in the Pastor's letter of recommendation, Pat was accepted and entered Holy Family Convent on August 22, 1952. After her year of Postulancy, Pat asked to enter the Novitiate. On Reception Day, June 13, 1953, Pat was given the name Sister Mary Patrick. At the time of Vatican Council II, when the Sisters could return to their baptismal name, Sister Mary Patrick returned to being named, Sister Patricia.

Sister Patricia attended Holy Family College earning a Bachelor of Art's Degree in 1958 with a Major in History and a Minor in English. In 1977 she completed studies at Clarke College in Dubuque, Iowa earning a Master of Arts Degree in Administration. Sister Patricia continued her studies in higher education at Loyola University in Chicago, Illinois, earning, in 1991, a Master of Arts Degree in Pastoral Studies. Over her years of ministry, Sister Patricia attended workshops to keep up-dated on latest trends in education, counseling and Pastoral Studies.

Sister Patricia taught in Wisconsin and in Ohio for 20 years before serving as a full-time principal for 16 years. In interacting with the students during the school year, Sister Patricia, experienced first-hand, the need to have a Counselor in schools to support the students, families and colleagues. She enjoyed this ministry for 14 years, serving in Michigan and in Wisconsin. In her last 10 years of active ministry, Sister Patricia was a Parish Visitor. Sister Patricia would sometimes conduct prayer services, wake and committal services, facilitate the meeting for the Survivors of Suicide Groups, lead Parish Bereavement Programs, take Holy Communion to the nursing homes, the hospital and to the homebound. She loved those visits

and the people she visited looked forward to her coming. She often mentioned that she received more than she gave.

Sister Patricia enjoyed walking, reading, golfing, skiing and visiting. She lived life to the full and was appreciative of the many blessings she received from her family, her Sisters in Community and all the people who were a part of her life in any way. In her Jubilee reflection she wrote, "I don't know what the future holds, but I do know who holds the future. My motto for life comes from the lyrics of the song, *God Has Chosen Me*. "God has chosen me to bring good news to the poor and to bring new sight for those who are searching for light. God is near in times of joy, fear, pain and suffering." Striving to keep God the center of my life has made all the difference. I continue to serve the Lord in mystery, wonder and gratitude."

Thank you, Sister Patricia, for the many ways you shared your life as a Franciscan Sister of Christian Charity. We are grateful that God chose you and that you responded to serve Him. May you enjoy your eternal reward.

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