

Sister Francis Paul Torre, OSF

Professed 1944

"What does 'evangelize' mean? To give witness with joy and simplicity to what we are and what we believe in." Pope Francis



Throughout her 78 years as a professed sister of St. Francis, Sister Francis Paul Torre gave deep and joyful witness to God and the Gospel. Her long life beautifully realized her desire "to be a good Franciscan and to set a good example to all I live with and my many students." Sister Francis Paul's wise ministry, spiritual depth, sense of humor, and open, loving personality were a gift to all who knew her.

Sister Francis Paul, who died on May 3, 2022, was born Antonette Torre in Brooklyn, New York, where she lived with her parents, Genevieve and Anthony, and her brothers and sisters. She was a member of Brooklyn's St. Francis Paola Parish and was a student at Girls' High School. Sister Francis Paul earned her diploma from Mount St. Dominic Academy in Caldwell, New Jersey, and then, from St. John's University, earned a Bachelor of Science in education with a focus on history. She entered the Franciscan Sisters of Ringwood in March 1943, professed her first vows in 1944, and became a sister of St. Francis of Philadelphia when the two congregations merged in 2003.

Reflecting recently on her life as a sister of St. Francis, Sister Francis Paul wrote, "I've always felt that I have been blessed with a religious vocation and have always been happy. I thank God for the peace, good health, and many blessings and graces he has bestowed on me over the years as a Franciscan sister. I love being with the sisters in times of fun and prayer. Many sisters have helped me to increase my spiritual life by their good example." Along with her great pleasure from her family, community, students, and other friends, Sister Francis Paul enjoyed arts and crafts ranging from decoupage to painting and was an avid reader, especially about history. She was also a loyal Mets fan.

Sister Francis Paul ministered in education, social work, parish ministry, and congregational administration. For 19 years beginning in 1944, she served the Diocese of Brooklyn in the areas of social work and parish ministry, taught in Holy Family School and St. Benedict School, and later became the principal of Holy Family School. In the mid-1960s, she taught at St. Ann School in Hoboken, New Jersey. For 46 years, she ministered in the Diocese of Paterson, New Jersey, where she taught at St. Catherine of Bologna School in Ringwood and St. Francis School in Haskell. In addition, she served as the administrator of St. Joseph Residence, as coordinator from 1968 to 1980 for Mount St. Francis, where she later served as treasurer for the community, and as supervisor of Ringwood's camp for boys. In the Diocese of Philadelphia, she ministered as a volunteer in the finance office of Our Lady of Angels Convent. Beginning in 2019, she served in prayer and hospitality ministry for Assisi House.

Reflecting on her friend and colleague, Sister Mary Rita Paratore describes Sister Francis Paul as not only deeply spiritual but also extremely compassionate to the sick, visiting those facing illness and bringing them comfort. She shares that Sister Francis Paul was both highly artistic and very efficient, an excellent administrator, and speaks of her sense of humor: "She was very funny and could uplift you if you were down." Honoring Sister Francis Paul and the gift of knowing her, Sister Donna Jo Repetti writes of her as a "very special, dynamic person and leader." Sister Kathleen Donovan adds, "What a wonderful woman. She was real! When she participated in area chapter meetings, she always affirmed the facilitator."

Throughout her long and meaningful life, Sister Francis Paul Torre lived her faith and Franciscan charism with joy, with deep conviction and sincerity, and with an abiding devotion to others. Her life will continue to remain a treasured blessing for the world.

*All services will be held in Assisi House on Tuesday, May 10, and will be livestreamed.
A Christian Wake Service will be held at 9:30 A.M. Mass of Christian Burial will be at 11 A.M.
Burial will be in Our Lady of Angels Cemetery.*