



Sister Dolores Donovan, OSF *Professed 1953*

*Hello, sun in my face. / Hello, you who made the morning / and spread it over the fields. . . . /
Watch, now, how I start the day / in happiness, in kindness.*
Mary Oliver, from "Why I Wake Early"



Sister Dolores Donovan, OSF, loved poetry, loved the morning sun and God's fields and forests, and lived her life nurturing happiness and sharing kindness. Sister Dolores passed away in Assisi House on August 5, 2022. She had been a professed member of the Sisters of St. Francis of Philadelphia for 69 years.

In her early years, Dolores Gertrude Donovan, her parents—Mary and William—and her brother and sister lived and worshipped in the Archdiocese of Philadelphia. Later, as a Sister of St. Francis of Philadelphia, Sister Dolores would minister in that archdiocese for 55 years. When she entered the congregation in 1950, she had graduated from West Catholic High School, been employed as a telephone operator, and was a member of Springfield's Holy Cross Parish. As Sister Redempta, she professed her first vows in 1953. A few years later, she earned her Bachelor of Science in education from Marylhurst College, the first women's liberal arts college in the Pacific Northwest. She then earned two Master of Arts degrees, in English from Villanova University and in spiritual direction from the Jesuit School of Theology. Throughout her decades as a Sister of St. Francis, she brought her wonderful innate gifts and her studies and experience to her long and devoted ministry in education and pastoral services.

Sister Dolores began her ministry by teaching at St. Edward School in Corona, California. She later shared, "While there, I taught third grade and then sixth grade. The children were all Hispanic. I loved them. After school we went out to teach the Catholic children who attended public school. Two of us would go to the public school to pick up the Catholic children and walk them back to the mission church. They sat on the grass on either side of the church." Also while she was on the West Coast, Sister Dolores completed her undergraduate education, taught at St. John Fisher School in Portland, and taught in Pendleton, Oregon, at St. Andrew Indian Mission and St. Joseph Academy.

Back on the East Coast, Sister Dolores taught English for four years at McCorriston High School in Trenton, New Jersey. Then in 1967, she returned to the Archdiocese of Philadelphia, where she ministered throughout the rest of her life. The schools benefiting from her knowledge and skill as an English teacher and from her Franciscan wisdom and kindness included St. Hubert Catholic High School, where she was the school newspaper advisor and inspired future journalists. She also taught English and inspired students to love literature and writing at Cardinal O'Hara High School and Saint Maria Goretti High School. Sister Dolores was equally gifted and giving in pastoral care. In that ministry, she served St. Agnes Hospital, St. Rita Parish, St. Elizabeth Parish, Doylestown's Our Lady of Mount Carmel Church, and Lower Makefield's St. John the Evangelist Church. She ministered for two years in the Archdiocese of Philadelphia Cordum Office, and in 2003, she began 14 years of ministry as a family caregiver. Since 2017, Sister Dolores served in prayer and hospitality ministry in Assisi House.

Speaking of her friend, Sister Kathleen Pollard shares that Sister Dolores was deeply prayerful. While she enjoyed having fun, she lived simply, always choosing a book over a television show or movie. Sister Kathleen speaks of Sister Dolores' great generosity, love of her family, and lifetime of "caring for and about other people." When Sister Dolores' brother died, for instance, her concern was for others, rather than for herself. Sister Kathleen emphasizes, "She never put herself first."

Through all those she served and everyone who had the blessing of knowing her, Sister Dolores Donovan's quiet joy and unending kindness will continue to spread in the world.

*All services will be held at Assisi House on Thursday, August 11, 2022, and will be private.
Viewing will begin at 9:30 A.M., followed by Mass of Christian Burial at 11 A.M.
Burial will be in Our Lady of Angels Cemetery.
-The services will be livestreamed.-*

