



Sister Christopher Marie Wagner, OSF Professed 1967

“Beauty is about an emerging fullness, a greater sense of grace and elegance, a deeper sense of depth, and a homecoming for the enriched memory of your unfolding life.” John O’Donohue

After a lifetime of seeing the beauty around her and sharing it with others through her art, Sister Christopher Marie Wagner died in Assisi House on Thursday, April 20, 2023. Sister Chris was born Loretta Florence in Baltimore, Maryland, to parents, Catherine and Michael—one of five children. The family were members of St. Anthony Parish. After graduating from The Catholic High School of Baltimore, Sister Christopher entered the congregation in 1964 and professed her first vows in 1967. Preparing for her ministry in education and art, Sister Chris earned a BA in French from Neumann University (then Our Lady of Angels College) and a MA in fine arts from The Catholic University of America.



Sister Chris’ passion for art was kindled in her high school years when she stayed after school to take oil painting classes with Sister Jane Frances Girard. She began her education ministry as a teacher in the Diocese of Washington, D.C., teaching for two years at Our Lady of Lourdes School in Bethesda. She then taught in the Archdiocese of Baltimore at Our Lady of Mount Carmel School for four years before returning to her alma mater, The Catholic High School of Baltimore, where she taught art for seven years. In 1982 Sister Chris moved to the Archdiocese of Philadelphia and to Neumann University where she established the art department and spent 15 years teaching. Neumann honored Sister Chris with the Growth Scholarship Award in 1994. When asked about Sister Chris, Sister Elaine Martin expressed her appreciation for Chris’ encouragement to see and create beauty in the world, saying, “She used her many gifts from God so beautifully for others and her witness inspired me to use my gifts.”

After learning the art of stained glass, Sister Chris became an artist in residence at Our Lady of Angels Convent where she undertook a nine-year labor of love to restore the stained-glass windows in Our Lady of Angels Chapel. She also designed and fabricated the Blessed Sacrament Chapel window and lancets, as well as, the sacristy lancets and sanctuary lamp. In a spring 2019 *Good News* article, Sister Chris talked about her love of glass sharing, “It is one of the most beautiful physical items in the world—especially colored glass. It brings light into our world.” Her artistry could also be seen in her drawings, paintings, and iconography, and even in her beautiful singing voice. For Sister Chris, art and prayer were intertwined. While working as an artist, Sister Chris continued to teach art both in iconography workshops and at Assisi House. She also served as vocation minister from 2013 to 2018. In 2023 she moved to Assisi House where she served in prayer and hospitality ministry until her death. Sister Christa Thompson shared, “Christopher was so grateful for God’s gifts to her; she was especially grateful that she was able to complete the drawings for the new chapel windows at Assisi House.”

Her good friend, Sister Virginia Spiegel said, “I thank God for the gift of Christopher’s friendship for the past 52 years. She kept me forever young.” Sara Marks, a companion and former member, expressed, “I have incredibly fond memories of my time living with Chris. We shared a love of old sci-fi and music ... you will be so missed my dear sister!” Sister Chris said for her *Good News* article, “The gift God has given me of being able to create works of art is such a wonderful blessing. It is what helps me to focus and share what I can see with others.” Thank you, Sister Christopher Marie for sharing your gentle spirit, your prayerful presence, and your beautiful art with us all. Like your beautiful artwork, your memory will live on in our hearts.

*All services will be held at Assisi House on Friday, April 28, 2023.
Viewing will begin at 9:30 A.M., followed by Mass of Christian Burial at 11 A.M.
The services will be livestreamed. Burial will follow in Our Lady of Angels Cemetery.*

