

# Remembering



Ann Marguerite Souza, CSJ

June 8, 1921 – September 21, 2017

Sister Ann Marguerite Souza, Margaret Anna, was born in Oakland, California. Her mother, Anna Carmel Fagetti, was born in Chiavena, Italy, and her father, Manuel Dennis Souza was born in Wailuku, Hawaii. Altogether in her family there were five daughters, Mary, Margaret Anna, Carmel, Frances and Agnes. Ten years separated the oldest from the youngest. They all sang and learned to play the keyboard, and Margaret Anna also played the pipe organ at St. Elizabeth Parish in Oakland from her 14<sup>th</sup> year on.

During the twelve years Margaret Anna attended the Dominican school St. Elizabeth, she worked at teaching herself music. She said, "My dad played the trombone in bands so he would bring music home for me and I would accompany him on the piano."

After graduating from

Holy Name College, with a major in English and minor in German, Margaret Anna decided to enter the Sisters of St. Joseph in 1943. She had attended Sister Margaret Frances' reception of the habit in Los Angeles and it rekindled an interest in religious life. Margaret Anna always held the Holy Name Sisters and the Dominican Sisters in high regard.

On September 6, 1943 Margaret Anna became a postulant of the Sisters of St. Joseph in Los Angeles. She received the habit on March 19, 1944 and was given the religious name Sister Ann Marguerite. First vows followed on March 19, 1946, and she pronounced her final vows on August 15, 1949. In 2014 Sister celebrated her 70<sup>th</sup> Jubilee. Members of her reception recalled that Sister often played the piano and lead them in singing popular songs in the Postulate. All joined in the singing and were soon

crying with homesickness.

Sister Ann Marguerite continued her studies to earn a degree in music and a Master's Degree in Education at USF. Sister started a 30 year career in teaching which included 10 years in elementary schools and 20 years in high schools, where she taught German, piano, and choir. Her proficiency in German enabled her to receive three study grants and to take student tours to Europe as well as an adult group on an Alpine Tour.

One memory of her early mission experiences was the sudden change from her first mission, kindergarten at St. Emydius School

after one semester, to St. Joseph Academy in Tucson to take over the entire music program, which included grammar and high school students. Sister came to love the Academy and cried when she was reassigned to California. She was enjoyed the quiet beauty and sunsets in the desert. One especially fond memory was casting and directing musicals to showcase student talents.

Sister Ann Marguerite was grateful to Sister Evelyn Joseph who encouraged her to start a German program at Our Lady of Peace Academy and to join the American Association of Teachers of German. This provided Sister with a network of support and teachers with similar interests.

In the 1980's, when unable to find a teaching assignment due to lack of interest in the study of German, and fewer music programs, Sister read that the Diocese of San Jose was being established and wanted advocates to work in the newly-formed Tribunal. Sister set out to learn about the 1917 Code of Canon Law and to master the

intricacies and paperwork involved in the annulment process. After two years of working as an Advocate, Sister wanted to learn more about the revised Code of 1983, which took a more pastoral approach. Sister studied from 1984 - 1986 at the Gregorian University in Rome to experience the church there and for the international exposure. She lived with and related to women religious from all over the world and remained in communication with sisters from various countries. Her studies led to a cum laude graduation and award of a J.C.L., a license in Canon Law.

Sister used her degree to serve in the Diocese of San Jose for sixteen years, and also for nine years in the Diocese of Idaho.

Sister's intelligence was extraordinary. Often she asked very insightful questions. She did not stint in using her gifts wholeheartedly. She was very well read and had opinions and insights on most topics. Once she set her mind to a goal she was undaunted in pursuing it. Words to describe her might include determined, convinced of her opinion, independent, loyal in keeping ties with those with whom she studied and worked. As Sister aged, she found illness and aging to be difficult, given her independent spirit. Sister's faith was great, her love of God was strong, and she was an avid supporter of Pax Christi.

In June 2008 Sister joined Holy Family Community. There she continued to read and live reflectively. For some years Sister played the piano for liturgy every Wednesday morning, carefully matching the songs to the readings of the day. Her nieces and nephews were very faithful in visiting her and helping with computer needs.

May Sister Ann Marguerite now find a special place in the heavenly chorus, content to play and sing before God, interceding for family, world peace and community. ☕

~ Written by Sister Frances Baker, CSJ

There is  
no way to  
peace,  
PEACE

is the  
WAY!

