**Sister Marie Weber**

**Born April 25, 1929, Died September 29, 2018**

Nellie Marie Weber was born in Ferdinand, Idaho in 1929, the third of seven children. “Our family lived near the Benedictine Monastery in Cottonwood , Idaho. My cousin joined their community. Since we did not go to the Catholic school, we had religious instruction after Sunday mass. ”Her father, Leo John Weber as a child lived near old St. Mary’s Academy in Los Angeles. After he graduated from St. John School, Hyde Park, his family moved to Idaho. It was in Idaho he met his wife, Frances Uhlenkott. Frances was born in Keuterville, Idaho. The seven children in the family were: Marjorie, Donald, Nellie, Dolores, Ruth, Phyllis, and Leroy. Nellie well learned the value of teamwork and cooperation from her large family. They were kind to her Prussian grandfather and enjoyed his stories about Germany. Later in life, she remained in touch with her seventeen nieces and nephews, and enjoyed following their lives.

Nellie attended Stock Creek Elementary School graduating in 1942, and Ferdinand High School, graduating in 1946. She then attended the Lewiston Business College, graduating in 1947. After Business College Nellie worked at St. Joseph’s Hospital in Lewiston, where she first met the Sisters of St. Joseph. A Jesuit priest in Lewiston has suggested she discuss her interest in religious life with the Sisters of St. Joseph in Lewiston. She wrote, “ I was given a reception position so I could become familiar with the Sisters. After working there about three months, I decided to join the Sisters.” She did not feel called to the Benedictine Sisters near her hometown.

On February 11, 1949 Nellie entered the postulate at old St. Mary’s. She received the habit on August 15, 1949 and was given the religious name Sister Frances Leo to honor her mother and father. In 1970 she changed her name to Sister Marie. In 2009 she celebrated her 60th Jubilee as a woman religious.

Sister Marie received a Bachelor of Arts from Mount St. Mary’s College in 1958, and a General Elementary Credential in 1958. In 1971 she received a Standard Secondary Credential. Over the years she also took courses at the College of Holy Names in Oakland, Lone Mountain College in San Francisco, University of San Francisco, and San Fernando Valley State College.

Her first teaching assignment was to teach third grade at St. Basil School in Vallejo in 1951. Soon she was teaching sixth, seventh and eighth graders. Sister taught for over 20 years, in California, Washington, and Idaho. She was especially helpful to children learning public speaking and offered encouragement and expertise to them in planning plays and other opportunities for the students. Marie then requested to leave teaching for office work,returning to California to minister in the Business Office of the Mount from 1974 – 1982. She then worked at St. Joseph’s Hospital in Tucson for two years.

In order to be near her family during both of her parents’ illnesses, she accepted the position of Administrative Assistant at Holy Name Center in Spokane from 1984 – 1990. After the sale of Fort Wright Holy Name Center, Sister remained as Office Manager for Mukogawa Fort Wright Institute from 1990 – 2003. The Institute is owned by Mukogawa Women’s University, the largest private women’s school based in Nishinomiya, Japan, the sister city of Spokane.

In her capacity as Office Manager, she learned to speak Japanese, perform the tea ceremony, and even traveled to Japan. Marie often found herself working as purchasing agent and over-seer; she was also responsible for general affairs. To call her a bridge-builder and liaison between the Japanese and American communities would not be an exaggeration. Sister “embodied the Japanese and American spirit and was recognized for her professional abilities.” She was highly regarded for her dedication and loyalty to the cause of the Institute. Marie’s respect, warmth, sensitivity to the people aided the transition of what could have been a difficult transfer. Her efforts to support the transfer helped to advance the cultural and economic benefits that greatly enhanced the best interests of both American and Japanese communities. Her role in bringing unity has not been forgotten. Thanks to her efforts, the term Global Community was expanded and made visible for us. She once said, “I was honored to be part of the Holy Name Center and then to assist with the transition of the Institute.”

She wrote, “As a thank you for all the work we did in management, we were given a trip to Japan, which I greatly enjoyed.”

Marie retired in 2003 in Spokane. She then volunteered her services at the Elderly Services Peer Counseling and at the Transition Program at Dominican Center in Spokane. This program served as a drop-in center for children after school. She also served as Receptionist at Mount St. Joseph. Even in retirement, various programs benefitted from her skills.

On June 2, 2008 Marie joined the Holy Family Community at Carondelet Center. Her quiet, peaceful manner graced the Holy Family Community. She once said, “I am very content and grateful to be here.” Due to a hearing loss, which began from a childhood illness, she became totally deaf. Several siblings also suffered a hearing loss. She shared, “Now I know what my mother went through when she lost her hearing.” Marie filled her days with prayer, spiritual reading and watching some news and history programs on television.

She was a quiet woman who led a gentle life. Now may St. Joseph escort her home to see her large family and enjoy the music of heaven, which she missed hearing for so long. May she give God endless praise and thanks for God’s unlimited gifts of Love to her.

Written by Sister Frances Baker