

Sister Mary Lou Roussin, C.PP.S.

Born: May 1, 1923

Professed: August 10, 1944

Entered into Life: May 6, 2021

Verse on her memorial card:

“Keep me O’ Lord as the apple of your eye and protect me under the shadow of your wings.”

Psalm 17:8

May 10, 2021



Dear Sisters,

Shortly after 3 p.m. on Thursday, May 6, 2021, the anniversary of her baptism, God called our Sister Mary Lou Roussin home. Just five days earlier, on Saturday, May 1, Sister Mary Lou reveled in an outdoor celebration of her 98th birthday with members of her family. Having enjoyed this celebration, it seemed she decided it was time to go, and a few days later, her loving God honored her wishes.

Born on May 1, 1923, Sister Mary Lou was the first of the four children of Harry and Marie (Zieter) Roussin. She was the first grandchild in the Roussin family and was named Mary Louise in honor of her two grandmothers. She entered our novitiate in 1942 and professed first vows on August 10, 1944, receiving the name Sister Rosella.

Sister Mary Lou completed both a Bachelor of Science and a Master of Arts degree in Geography at St. Louis University. In addition, she completed a Bachelor of Arts in Liturgical Music at St. Joseph’s College in Collegeville, Indiana.

Sister Mary Lou’s love of geography inspired students in Missouri at St. Paul, St. Paul; Assumption, Mattese; Sts. Philip and James, River Aux Vases; St. Paul, Fenton; St. Patrick, Wentzville; Holy Rosary, Warrenton; St. Alphonsus, Millwood; St. Sabina, Florissant; St. Agnes, Bloomsdale; Holy Family and St. Monica, both in St. Louis; and St. Mary’s College in O’Fallon. Outside of Missouri, she taught at St. Pius X, Pueblo, CO; St. Mary’s, Quincy, IL; Redwood School of the Precious Blood, Redwood, MN. After thirty-nine years of teaching, Sister Mary Lou worked as office manager and chiropractic assistant to Dr. Larry Link. In retirement, she chauffeured the sisters at St. Elizabeth Academy, taught religious education at St. Joseph Croatian Catholic Church and served as Eucharistic Minister at St. Elizabeth Adult Day Care Center. In 2010 she returned to O’Fallon where she served in the ministry of Prayer and Presence.

Sister Mary Lou loved to travel and was grateful for the first-hand experience this allowed her to bring to her teaching. In her autobiography she wrote that she felt

privileged and grateful to have traveled to France, Italy, Germany, Austria, Switzerland, Spain, England, Scandinavia, Greece, Japan, Taiwan, Hong Kong, Thailand, New Zealand, and many U.S. states, including Hawaii and Alaska.

Grateful, perhaps, is one of the best words to describe Sister Mary Lou. She always expressed gratitude for even the smallest kindness or remembrance. Upon receiving Holy Communion, she would respond, "Amen. Thank you." She treasured gifts from others, and she loved to give gifts as a token of her gratitude. She left instructions about items to be returned to family members or friends, saying, "Thanks for the use."

Sister Mary Lou kept busy and engaged. She loved playing bingo at Abbey Senior Health, and she enjoyed computer games and puzzles. Sister Julie appreciated evening visits with Sister Mary Lou; though most Abbey residents were asleep, Julie always found Mary Lou busy with some activity.

Family was vitally important to Sister Mary Lou, and she treasured every visit from them. She particularly enjoyed when her sister, Doris, would spend a few days in O'Fallon. After Doris was no longer able to travel and almost to the time of Doris' death, she and Sister Mary Lou spoke by phone every day.

Sister Mary Lou was preceded in death by her parents, by her sister, Doris, and by her brothers, John and Donald Roussin. She is survived by her brother-in law, Roger Landwehr, her sister-in-law, Dorothy Roussin, by nieces, nephews, and many friends. Please keep all of them and her profession classmates in your prayers.

Sister's body will return to St. Joseph Chapel at 4 p.m. on Monday, May 10, 2021, and the sisters at Villa Theresa and the Abbey will gather for a Prayer Service of Thanksgiving at 4:40 p.m. (Sister requested no sharing of memories.) A wake will be held at Assumption Parish in O'Fallon on Tuesday, May 11, 2021, at 9:30 a.m. with the Mass of Christian Burial at 10:30 a.m. Burial in the convent cemetery will follow the Mass.

Sister Mary Lou chose a verse from Psalm 17 for her memorial card: "Keep me, O Lord, as the apple of your eye and protect me under the shadow of your wings." We know that she was, indeed, the apple of God's eye, and we trust that she now is enjoying the fullness of baptismal life under the shadow of God's wings.

Sincerely,

Sr. Janice Bader

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