

Sister Betty Jean Korte, C.PP.S.

Born: July 1, 1928

Professed: August 10, 1948

Entered into Life: October 23, 2022

Verse on her memorial card:

“In the morning I shall sing glad songs of praise to you.” Psalm 63



Dear Sisters,

At approximately 6:35 p.m. on Sunday, October 23, 2022, Sister Betty Jean’s intense prayer of these recent months was answered – God took her to her eternal home. Sydney, a nurse from Abbey Senior Health, was at her side as she peacefully took her last breath.

Elizabeth Eugenia (Betty Jean) Korte was born in Glasgow, MO, on July 1, 1928, the oldest of six children of Ben and Florence (Brand) Korte. She grew up on a farm, and at an early age developed a contemplative appreciation of the beauties of creation.

Betty Jean attended the one-room St. Mary’s High School in Glasgow. Inspired by Sister Elegia, she entered our aspirancy at the beginning of her junior year. She was received into our novitiate on July 25, 1946, and she professed first vows on August 10, 1948. She received the name Sister Mary Richard.

Sister Betty Jean completed a Bachelor of Arts degree in English at Creighton University in Omaha, NE and a master’s in education and Montessori administration at Xavier University in Cincinnati, OH.

Sister Betty Jean taught elementary grades at the following Missouri schools: Sacred Heart, Columbia; Holy Innocents and St. John the Baptist, St. Louis; St. Sabina and Sacred Heart, Florissant; Linda Vista Montessori School, Chesterfield; St. Joseph, Cottleville; St. Brendan, Mexico; and St. Anthony of Padua, High Ridge. She also taught at St. Peter’s in Quincy, IL.

Inspired by a speaker who visited her class at Sacred Heart, Florissant, Sister Betty Jean joined a group of summer volunteers in Haiti. She spent three weeks caring for the poorest of the poor, and she often spoke and wrote of how profoundly this changed her life.

After retiring from teaching, Sister Betty Jean performed a variety of ministries. She served in hospice ministry, as a caregiver for the elderly, and in the Alternative to Prison ministry in Jefferson City. From 1993 until 2003 she cooked for our sisters at St. Monica Retirement Center. She dearly loved this ministry and delighted in the preparation of the fresh fruits and vegetables, the beauty of their colors and the ways this reconnected her to her farming roots.

Sister Betty Jean described herself as a “daughter of the land.” In her autobiography, she tells of “meeting God” as she milked the cows, always facing East to watch the sunrise. This was her morning prayer that needed no words. She also attributed her deep appreciation of Eucharist to her farmer’s heritage. Her heart was stirred by memories of her father sowing wheat and of her mother baking bread – bread shared, fragrant, warm, and slathered with homemade butter – a richness that fed body and soul.

Sister Betty Jean was an artist who created beauty in watercolor, in poetry and prose, and in culinary delights. Her attentiveness to the splendors of creation and her careful observation of details enhanced all her creative endeavors.

Sister Betty Jean was preceded in death by her parents, her sister, Doris Borges, and her brothers, Jack, Ken, and Rick. She is survived by her brother, Bob, by Ken’s wife, Jan, and by nieces and nephews. Let us hold in prayer all those who will miss her earthly presence and the beauty she added to life through her art and through her gentle spirit.

Sister Betty Jean requested cremation and asked that her remains be interred in a wooden box so that she will return to the earth she so dearly loved. We will welcome her cremains to St. Joseph Chapel at 1 p.m. on Friday, November 4, 2022. The Mass of Christian Burial will be celebrated at 2:30 p.m. that day. She will be buried in our convent cemetery.

Sister Betty Jean chose a verse from Psalm 63 for her memorial card. “In the morning I shall sing glad songs of praise to you.” We give thanks that she is free from the pain and suffering of these past months and can envision her singing glad songs of praise with her family members and our sisters with whom she now is reunited.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Sr. Janice Bader". The ink is dark and the handwriting is fluid and personal.

Sr. Janice Bader