



Sr. Marie Cimino, OSF

Professed 1951

"We are not called to serve merely in order to receive a reward, but rather to imitate God, who made Himself a servant for our love." Pope Francis



Throughout her 74 years as a professed Sister of St. Francis, Sr. Marie Cimino (formerly Sr. Mary Gerard) gave deep and joyful witness to God and the Gospel. Her long life beautifully fulfilled her desire to be a good Franciscan and to set an exemplary model for all who lived with her and her many students. Sr. Marie's wisdom, spiritual depth, sense of humor, and loving personality were gifts to all who knew her.

Sr. Marie was born in Brooklyn, New York, where she lived with her parents, William and Madeline, and her brothers and sisters. She graduated from St. Nicholas Commercial High School. In September 1949, Sr. Marie entered the Franciscan Sisters of Ringwood, professed her first vows in 1951, and became a Sister of St. Francis of Philadelphia when the two congregations merged in 2003. Reflecting on her life as a Sister of St. Francis, Sr. Marie once wrote, "I love being a Franciscan sister. I pray to St. Clare and St. Francis every day to give me the good health to carry on for the love of God. I love to share with people and to help them."

Sr. Marie's ministry focused primarily on education and parish work. She taught for eight years in the Brooklyn Diocese and another six in the Archdiocese of Newark. Most notably, she devoted 56 years to the Paterson Diocese, teaching at Mt. Carmel School in Passaic, St. Catherine of Bologna School in Ringwood, and St. Francis School in Haskell. She also served as director of Camp Alvernia in Ringwood. However, her longest service—40 years—was at Our Lady Queen of Peace School in Hewitt. There, she earned the Vivere Christus Award for her dedication. In a write-up by Father Michael, he described Sr. Marie's impact: "For more than 30 years, Sr. Marie taught in our parish school and Childcare Academy. Besides teaching literally hundreds of children in her lifetime, she actively volunteered in our parish food pantry and served as an Extraordinary Minister. She gave tirelessly whenever her help was needed. She has been truly dedicated to our parish."

Sr. Rita Paratore, who lived with Sr. Marie for more than 30 years, recalled her friend as "very faithful to her students and always recognized by them. Father Richard Tressa, OFM, was taught by her in first grade and attended her birthday party last year. She always shared that she had taught him and another priest—it made her very proud. Any former student she saw later would stop her to say, 'you taught me in first grade.'" Sr. Ronnie Grier remembered Sr. Marie from her early days in the community, when she served as an assistant in Sr. Marie's first-grade classroom at St. Francis School: "As a teacher, Sr. Marie loved getting the children singing and using songs to transition from one activity to another. She was a lot of fun and had a good sense of humor." Sr. Maggie Lopez added, "She was a legend, a very popular teacher because parents saw how much their children learned. I benefited from her teaching when her first-grade students reached my fifth-grade class. They were very independent children. She was truly amazing in the classroom."

Sr. Marie's care extended beyond her students. Sr. Rita Paratore shared, "Marie was very personable, warmly greeting everyone and always willing to help. She loved life and loved people." Sr. Maggie echoed this sentiment: "I always felt welcomed by her. She would frequently ask when I was going to visit. I have nothing but warm memories of this truly amazing woman." In her free time, Sr. Marie enjoyed reading, solving word puzzles, and writing cards to those who were sick or lonely.

Throughout her long and meaningful life, Sr. Marie Cimino remained a woman of great prayer and reflection. She lived her faith and Franciscan charism with unending service filled with joy, deep conviction, and sincerity. Her life will remain a treasured blessing to the world.



*All services will be held in Assisi House on Friday, January 24, and will be livestreamed.
A Christian Wake Service will be held at 9:30 A.M. Mass of Christian Burial will be at 11 A.M.
Burial will be in Our Lady of Angels Cemetery in Aston, Pennsylvania.*