



## *Sr. Mary Catherine Lewandowski, OSF*

*Professed 1962*



*"Solidarity finds concrete expression in service, which can take a variety of forms in an effort to care for others." Pope Francis*



Sr. Mary Catherine Lewandowski, OSF (formerly Sr. Anne Christi), passed away on April 30, 2025. Over her 63 years as a professed Sister of St. Francis of Philadelphia, she joyfully lived her Franciscan charism. Born in Baltimore, Maryland, to her parents, Adam and Valeria, she and her sister Margie grew up in St. Clare Parish. Sr. Mary Catherine was a graduate of The Catholic High School of Baltimore (TCHS) and earned a BA in English and a BS in Biology from Neumann University. She also earned a master's degree in education from Towson University.

Entering the community in 1959 and professing her first vows in 1962, Sr. Mary Catherine began her ministry teaching in the Archdiocese of Philadelphia at Our Lady of Consolation and Lansdale Catholic. She then served the congregation as formation director, before returning to education ministry and her hometown. She taught and was vice-principal at Towson Catholic High School and then was vice-principal for two years and principal for three years at Our Lady of Mount Carmel High School. Returning to her alma mater, Sr.

Mary Catherine was the principal of Catholic High for seven years. Sr. Kathy Dougherty was a teacher at TCHS during this time and shared, "Mary Catherine was a wonderful principal and cherished friend. As a leader, she was always supportive of both faculty and students, fostering an environment where everyone could thrive. She encouraged her faculty to be innovative, giving them the freedom to explore new and creative ways of educating students. Her keen intellect was matched by her deep compassion, demonstrating her living of Catholic High's motto, 'Let Your Light Shine.'"

After over 20 years in education ministry, Sr. Mary Catherine pivoted into parish ministry and served as a pastoral associate at Ascension Parish in Halethorpe, Maryland. She was an unofficial member of the Men's Club and kept them all "in line." She was integrated into not just the activities of the parish, but the lives of the parishioners who called that parish their "spiritual home." When she left they dedicated a statue of the Blessed Mother outside of the Church in her honor. Bishop Adam Parker was a seminarian there and from that time until today remained a very good friend of Mary Catherine. On hearing the news of her passing, one parishioner shared on Facebook, "Thank you for taking us at Ascension Parish under your wings and loving us as you did. I love you and I will never forget you."

When asked how she would describe herself, Sr. Mary Catherine wrote, "I am intense, responsible, pleasant, friendly, well-organized, and enjoy a good time." Sr. Julie McCole, a longtime friend, would agree. She remembers Sr. Mary Catherine as "thoughtful, talented, and fun to live with. She put her all into everything she did, and she worked and played with intensity." Sr. Mary Catherine enjoyed cooking, baking, and playing games, especially cards. Sr. Helen Jacobson shared, "She loved to cook, especially for special occasions and always prepared an abundance," and Sr. Pat Millen added that "it was an honor when she invited you to be part of her cooking team." Sr. Angela DeFontes recalled "Mary Catherine was famous for her luncheons. She was very sisterly and enjoyed helping celebrate birthdays and jubilees with her local community." Sr. Mary Catherine's intensity carried over to her play making her fiercely competitive. She loved to watch the Orioles play, especially when they were beating the Yankees, and whatever game she played, she was in it to win it! Sr. Kathy Dougherty said, "Beyond her professional life, Mary Catherine had a great love for the natural world. She spent many vacations camping and exploring the outdoors, finding joy and peace in nature's beauty. She also enjoyed music, good books, and fun times with friends and family."

When asked about her life as a Sister of St. Francis, Sr. Mary Catherine wrote, "I have had the opportunity in community living and in ministry to live in continual conversion to the Gospel way of life. I have been blessed by God without measure." All who have had the blessing of knowing Sr. Mary Catherine will remember her kindness, generosity, giftedness, and zest for life.

*All services will be held at Assisi House on Tuesday, May 6, 2025.*

*Viewing will begin at 9:30 A.M., followed by Mass of Christian Burial at 11 A.M. The services will be livestreamed.*

*Burial will be in Our Lady of Angels Cemetery.*

