



## *Sister Jean Wickenheiser, OSF*

### *Professed 1965*

*"It was not you who chose me, but I who chose you." ~ John 15:16*



Sr. Jean Wickenheiser lived a life of loving service, trusting in God's extravagant love to accompany her on her journey. Born the youngest of Frank and Mabel's five children, the Wickenheiser family attended Holy Trinity Parish in Columbia, Pennsylvania, and Sr. Jean was a graduate of Lancaster Catholic High School. At first, she resisted the call to religious life, but her heart won out and she followed in her big sister's footsteps, entering the congregation in 1962.

Sr. Jean spent 50 years in education ministry, as both a teacher and principal. Beginning her ministry in the Archdiocese of Philadelphia, her first mission was teaching first grade at St. Stanislaus School in Lansdale. She then taught first grade at Our Lady of Mt. Carmel in Doylestown. Her ministry in the Archdiocese also included teaching at Resurrection in Chester and St. Aloysius in Pottstown.

More than 40 of Sr. Jean's years in education ministry were in the Allentown Diocese. She taught at Holy Ghost School in Bethlehem, Easton Catholic Elementary, and St. Mary School in Catasauqua. She served for nine years as principal of Sacred Heart School in Allentown. Following her years in administration, Sr. Jean returned to the classroom, spending the next 20 years teaching kindergarten—which she described as “the love of my life.”—in Our Lady of Hungary School in Northampton, St. Francis of Assisi School in Allentown, and St. Francis Academy in Bally. In describing her ministry, she said, “My achievements and ‘rewards’ vs. ‘awards’ include knowing that in some small way I was able to be instrumental in planting the seeds of faith and the love of Jesus in so many little ones’ hearts.”

Following her many years in the classroom, Sr. Jean took on a new role in parish ministry. First, she worked as a parish visitor at St. Columbkil in Boyertown. It was there that she won third place in the parish's First Annual Chili Cook-Off Contest with her mother's recipe of M & M Chili (Mild and Meaty). She made such an impression at St. Columbkil, that when Fr. Martin Kern was transferred to Our Lady of Perpetual Help in Bethlehem, he offered Sr. Jean a job as a pastoral associate. Reflecting on her years in parish ministry, Sr. Jean once said, “Just when I thought it couldn't get any better, I was blessed to become part of a parish ministry team. Those years were filled with many joys and blessings while serving God's family.”

In her free time, Sr. Jean had many interests. She enjoyed following college sports and rooting for Notre Dame, Villanova, and Penn State. She was also an avid Phillies and Eagles fan. Sr. Jean's leisure activities also included entertaining friends and family and showing off her culinary skills by cooking and baking. She also loved to use her creative side in decorating and creating a welcoming ambiance, skills no doubt honed by her many years teaching kindergarten.

Sr. Jean, you lived your life spreading Franciscan joy to all who crossed your path. Rest now, dear sister, in the arms of God's extravagant love.

*All services will be held at Assisi House on Tuesday, February 17, 2026. A Christian Wake Service will be held at 9:30 A.M., followed by a viewing. Mass of Christian Burial will be at 11 A.M., and burial will be in Our Lady of Angels Cemetery. The services will be livestreamed.*

