

SISTERS OF ST. FRANCIS, CLINTON, IOWA

ST. FRANCIS DE PAULA NEWSLETTER

October 2021

Feedback from "Names of the Neighborhood"

Submitted by Carol (Siciliano) Gierman, Class of 1960

Thank you so much for keeping the St. Francis de Paula flame burning! What fond memories of happier times in a great neighborhood. My cousin, Fran (Siciliano) Ciszewski of the Class of 1958, and I always chat after we receive our newsletters. From the spring edition article "Names of the Neighborhood," we remember some additional places:

- Tiny store Timmie and Rose Abbott's on 77th near Dobson on the alley;
- Ernie Scaramella's shoe repair store on 79th near Ellis;
- Jennie Chianelli and my aunt Florence Calvano had a variety store on 82nd;
- Stanley's Drugstore;
- Nudo's Tavern on Greenwood;
- Brown's Greenwood Club;
- Kladas ice cream and candy shop on 82nd Street;
- Tavern on the corner of 79th and Dobson;
- Rossi's Pizza on 79th;
- Betty and Bernie's Pizza on 82nd;
- Red Rome's secondhand furniture store;
- Red Goose Shoes;
- Woolworth's on 79th;
- Don Mack's office supply with shoeprints on the wall with the slogan *Make Tracks to Don Mack's*;
- Carmie's (?) tiny store on 79th and Dobson with dirt floor and low ceiling;
- Going to the Avalon show on Sunday afternoons, my mom would say "too sick to go to church, too sick to go to the show;"
- The place where they cut grave markers at 77th and Greenwood.



**Mack's
Restaurant
(left) and
Bowman Ice
Cream (below)**



Interesting that I can remember these places and, yet, when I walk out of the grocery store now, I can't remember where I parked my car! Thank you again for keeping fond memories alive.

John "Jack" Calabrese, Class of 1954, phoned the Sisters of St. Francis Administrative Office with a few other places he remembered while growing up in Chicago...

- Mickey's Grill at 75th and Dobson
- Starr Funeral Parlor
- Candy store by Hersh High School
- Sears

— Remembering the Sisters at SFDP —

Published by the late Paul Somers, Class of 1942, in The New World, November 1993

Our teachers were members of the Sisters of St. Francis from Clinton, Iowa, who knew how to teach and tolerated no amateur “help.” A parent/teacher club would have seemed as preposterous to them as a passenger/pilot club.

In 1992, I met with twenty-three former 1942 St. Francis grads. Much of the table talk concerned the sisters. Three principals, two piano teachers, and eleven classroom teachers were recalled fondly.

There was also Sister Hildegarde, who was said to be the cook. No one at our reunion had ever met her and we concluded she may never have existed, the name serving only to extract an extra \$30 per month from the pastor! (Ghost payrolling was an art form in Chicago.)

We remembered Sister de Lourdes who died untimely after helping her first-graders with



**Sr. Louise
Higdon**

Dick and Jane and preparing us for our First Communion; Sister Louise who launched us into arithmetic—to this day I’m not clear what “math” is; Sister Coralita who introduced the concept of zero; and Sister Bridget Ann who taught us the multiplication tables and described the order of the Mass.

Fifth grade brought us long division and Sister Esther, who had an unusual approach to discipline. When we began to misbehave, she would remove her gold ring with great flourish. This meant that we had gone far enough. None of us ever had the imprudence to push any further.

Sister Mercita did not always agree with my approach to classroom decorum. In sixth grade, I wrote, “I must not talk during class” many thousands of times. Looking back, if she had me write lines from the Bard I might have become a great Shakespearean actor, alas!

Seventh grade, with Sister deChantal, was something special. My affection for her continued into adult life and, last I know, there was a stained glass window in the chapel at the motherhouse inscribed with her name and mine.

Sister Monica, the red-haired master of the eighth grade (we knew because her eyebrows were red, how else?), had her hands full with 56 of us. She taught the regular eighth grade fare plus the history of Chicago.

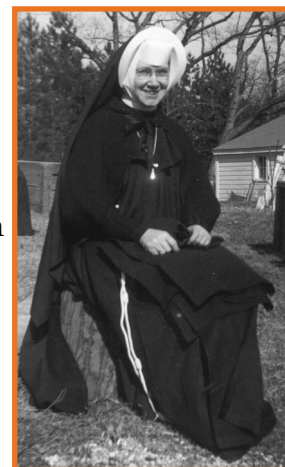
Sisters Bertrand and Camilla were our piano teachers. Sister Camilla labored six years to interest me in Bach and Beethoven, but my heart belonged to Irving Berlin.

The principals who guided St. Francis were also remarkable. Sister John was elected mother general of the order and, with the help of God, led it through the Great Depression and World War II. Sister Robert ran the school so unobtrusively that few students were ever “sent to the office” and, believe me, I would have been the first to know! During my final years at St. Francis, Sister Magdalen was principal. Her nickname was “Little Dynamite” and the enthusiasm she packed into her 5-foot frame merited the appellation.

The reunion attendees who had Sisters Assisium, Elizabeth, and Magdalen in “double rooms” expressed similar enthusiasm for those teachers.



Sr. Camilla Klein



**Sr. Magdalen
Mitch**

We pray for the repose of the souls of:

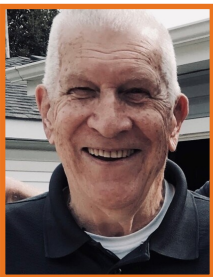
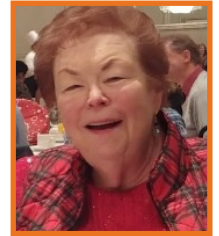


Kathleen (Barrett) Boland — September 22, 2021

Kathleen was a member of the St. Francis de Paula Class of 1959. She was born July 14, 1941, the daughter of Martin and Nora Barrett. She married Thomas Boland and they were united in marriage for 56 years. They had five children — Martin, Michael, Kathleen, Teresa, and Thomas — and fourteen grandchildren. Kay was a former secretary at St. Denis Grammar School in Chicago, and a longtime member and officer of The Clare Association.

Mary “Mickey” (Joslyn) O’Keefe — June 16, 2021

Mary Anita was a member of the St. Francis de Paula Class of 1956. She was born October 31, 1942. She married Denis O’Keefe and had one daughter, Kathleen, and one granddaughter.



Edward Schmitt — January 22, 2021

Edward was a member of the St. Francis de Paula Class of 1947. He was born January 27, 1933, the son of Charles and Margaret Schmitt. He graduated from Mount Carmel High School in 1951. Ed served in the Army during the Korean War. After returning to the United States, he attended Memphis State before coming back to Illinois. He married Leona Hanley and they had thirteen children — Thomas, John, Edward, Stephen, David, Daniel, William, Paul, Michael, Margaret, Mary, Anne, and Kathy — twenty-seven grandchildren and five great-grandchildren. Ed worked as an insurance broker for Marsh McLennan in Chicago for over 20 years before branching out on his own to begin Carey Associates. He was a member of Sacred Heart Parish where he coached the basketball team for many years.

Sheila Isabel Haley — August 17, 2020

Sheila Haley was a member of the St. Francis de Paula Class of 1954. She was born July 11, 1940.

Barbara (Kosarko) Ninkovich — April 17, 2020

Barbara was a member of the St. Francis de Paula Class of 1953. She was born July 18, 1939, the daughter of Stephen and Joan Kosarko. She graduated in 1957 from SS Peter and Paul High School. Upon graduation, she began her career as an executive secretary for Union Carbide. Barb married Thomas Ninkovich. Besides her sense of humor, sweet personality, and sense of style, Barb will be most remembered as a talented artist. After just a few “fun” art classes, she became a serious painter.



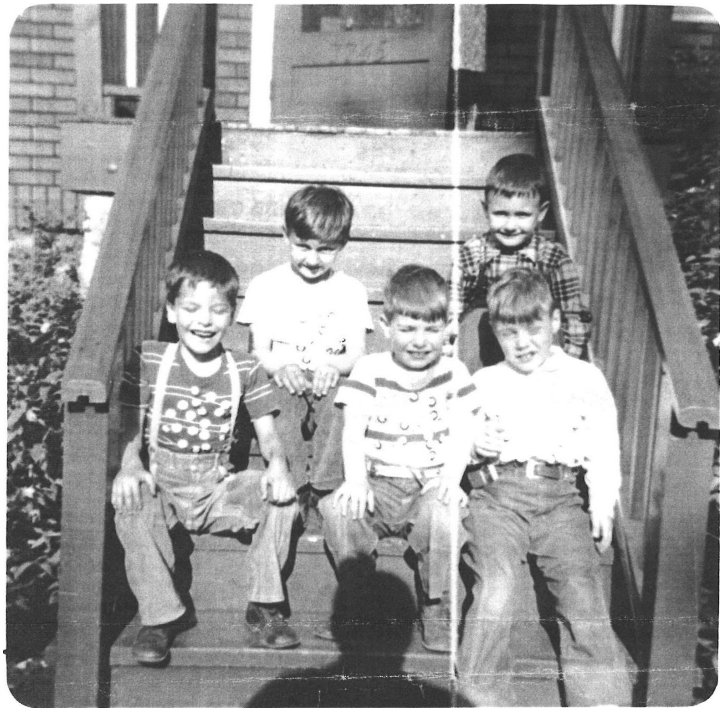
Roland Perruso — November 11, 2019

Roland “Rollie” was a member of the St. Francis de Paula Class of 1950. He was born January 24, 1936, the son of Ersilio and Mary Perruso. He married Mary and they had two children, Richard and Dina.

— Childhood Memories —

Thank you to the anonymous alumnus who submitted the photo at right labeled “The Grand Crossing Gang from Dobson Avenue 1951.”

Pictured below are members of the Class of 1956: (kneeling) Mary Lee Guzzo Rosland, Carol Watts Bennis; (standing) Mary Ann Alois Oswald, Susan Baumbach Young, Sister William McCue, Mary Joslyn O’Keefe, and Joan Jordan Brass.



Share With Us!

We are always looking for new content to include in the newsletters! Please share any memories or life updates with us. Getting together in-person or virtually with classmates? Send us a picture! We also appreciate being notified of deaths.

It is helpful to include if the person is a classmate, parishioner, and/or relative. All information can be sent to Amanda Eberhart using the information below.

*“Preach the Gospel at all times
and when necessary use words.”*

- St. Francis of Assisi