

Sister Kathleen Loewen, OP



Born to Earthly Life on March 23, 1935

First Profession on August 15, 1957

Entered Eternal Life on January 15, 2022

NANCY ANN was born on March 23, 1935 in Kenosha, Wisconsin, the second of three children of William and Margaret Frederick Loewen. She was gifted in music from a young age, playing organ for her parish by the time she was 12 years old.

While growing up, she became acquainted with members of different religious communities - she had sisters as teachers in grade school and as a family they regularly visited two of her aunts who were also sisters. It was during her high school years and the first year of college that she met the Racine Dominicans. She often said that it was “a spirit of joy within the community that attracted me to them.” She answered her call and joined the Racine Dominicans, and was given the name Kathleen of the Obedience of Jesus. She made her first profession on August 15, 1957 and her final vows on August 15, 1963.

S. Kathleen received a Bachelor’s in Music from Dominican College and a Master’s Degree in Religious Studies, Music and Liturgy from Webster College in Webster, Missouri, where she majored in organ and liturgy and minored in piano.

Her first ministries were rooted in education and music, as a teacher of middle and upper grade school children at St. John in South Milwaukee, St. Bernard in Madison and Holy Name in Racine. She was a dedicated teacher and enjoyed working with her students. She then was called to be the Liturgist and musician at Siena Center, as well as a musician and liturgist for several local parishes. Music was a gift that she shared with others, from playing at liturgy to offering music lessons for children and adults.

Her ministry again evolved when she was hired in the Milwaukee Archdiocesan Office of Worship as its Director, the first woman to hold the post previously only held by priests. Her role was to create programs for liturgical celebrations for the diocese and parishes, including music resources. She also taught liturgy/worship at St. Francis Seminary to both seminarians and those preparing for the diaconate.

S. Kathleen became known in state and national circles as a significant force in bringing to life the liturgical changes initiated by Vatican II. She served on state and national advisory boards for liturgy as well as accepted a two-year appointment to the National Catholic Bishops Committee on Liturgy. In 1995 she received the Archdiocesan Vatican II Award for her service in Liturgy and her tireless dedication and efforts to maintain high standards in liturgy. And during this time, she still shared her musical talents by playing piano and organ often and continuing to teach lessons.

S. Kathleen was a gifted and talented woman who loved God and the Church with an intensity and depth you could hear as she played the organ or piano. She lived her faith through her prayer and through the beautiful music she shared with all of us.

