

Sister Yvonne Renner, OP



Born to Earthly Life on September 19, 1931

First Profession on August 15, 1950

Entered Eternal Life on September 3, 2022

CAROL JOAN RENNER was born September 19, 1931 in Marshfield, Wisconsin, daughter of John and Antonella Renner. She had two younger brothers, Jerome and Richard, and the Renner home was filled with music as a young Joan took piano lessons and found her passion.

Joan always knew she wanted to be a Sister. She admired her Franciscan teachers in school, but when her mother realized Joan was serious about joining a religious community she told her, "I want you to meet my Dominican cousins." After visiting the motherhouse in Racine, she decided this was the community for her. She made her First Profession in 1950 and Final Profession in 1956, and was given the name of Sister Yvonne of the Immaculate Heart of Mary.

The community recognized her musical talent and sent her to the American Conservatory of Music in Chicago where she received her Bachelor's degree in Music in 1959 and a Master's degree in Music in 1970. Obtaining these degrees was no easy task, as she was also working full time as a music teacher in Green Bay, Kenosha and Racine. She could play several instruments, but she loved piano and organ most of all.

S. Yvonne began her teaching ministry in schools throughout Wisconsin, including St. Mary in Kenosha, SS Peter and Paul in Green Bay and St. Rita and St. Catherine's High School in Racine. She also taught private lessons in Racine for decades, where hundreds of students found a love of music through her teaching and guidance.

S. Yvonne loved teaching music to all age groups, and what made her an excellent teacher was her ability to meet each student's needs. She knew that younger students begin very enthusiastically but the fervor waned when they realized how much work was required to learn a musical instrument, and she found games and other tools to keep them motivated. Or that teenagers sometimes had trouble finding the motivation to practice, so she encouraged them to pick music they liked, rather than what was in their lesson books. She was a teacher who understood her students and had the enthusiasm and desire to help them excel.

After retiring from teaching in schools, she became the liturgist and organist at Siena Center. She decided to start a bell choir and encouraged Sisters to join, even if they had never played an instrument before. In order to ensure their success, she spent countless hours preparing the music, using colors to help code notes for those that couldn't read music. She never gave up teaching lessons, sharing her gift of music with so many.

S. Yvonne saw music as an expression of prayer and praise of God. She once shared that, "our God is a 'God of Beauty' and I have the privilege of being a part of the sounds that reflect it." We believe God shared S. Yvonne with us so she could teach us to be instruments of his word.



Thank you S. Yvonne, for sharing your gift of music with us all.