

2025 Jubilee

SISTER MARIE FRANCINE KOEHLER

First Profession



July 31, 1965

Celebrating 60 years



When asked to share a special Jubilee memory, **Sister Marie Francine Koehler** recalls, “The close relationships formed every place I was sent - all 13 of them!” A native of St. Louis, Sister Marie Francine has enjoyed a ministry that has taken her from her home state to far away locations and back again. The first 19 years of her ministry were spent in educational roles including teacher, administrator and director of religious education in locations throughout Missouri, Illinois and California. In 1986, she embarked on what would be nearly a decade living and working in Honduras. Of this special time she says, “Those years truly opened my eyes to the beauty and richness of diversity. Through prayer, ministry and humor (mostly ‘bloopers’ learning the language), our intercultural community grew in unity.” During her residency in Honduras, Sister Marie Francine was director of initial formation for Casa Formation, a teacher and campus minister at Instituto Notre Dame and an administrator for the Notre Dame Retreat Center in El Progreso. Upon returning to the U.S. and St. Louis in 1997, Sister Marie Francine applied her past experience in Honduras as she undertook two concurrent positions as a Hispanic pastoral minister, one at St. Ann Church in Carthage and the other at Sacred Heart in Webb City, both in Missouri. When those roles concluded in 2004, she moved to Columbia, Missouri and served as pastoral minister of care and Hispanic ministries for Sacred Heart Catholic Parish until 2010. She continued sharing her gifts as a pastoral minister for another 13 years, serving at Our Lady of the Lake in Branson, Missouri, Sacred Heart Catholic Parish in Columbia and in pastoral Hispanic ministry for St. Canera Parish in Neosho, Missouri. Sister Marie Francine currently resides in St. Charles, Missouri, where she volunteers at St. Cletus Parish, directing English Language Learner (ELL) classes, as well as volunteering at The Sarah Community.

What advice or words of wisdom would you want to impart to others?

I want every person to feel loved, special, capable. I welcome all people into my home, my heart. I would lighten up! Be mindful of the gift of the present moment. Tell people, “I love you!” Share whatever I have. Plant more flowers. Smile at strangers. Seek God in the ordinary joys of life. Express gratitude. Allow hope to pour her light into my soul and overflow to the darkest parts of the world. Grow in reverence and compassion for all God’s creation. Delight in the multidimensional diversity that surrounds me.

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