

The Joyful Life of Sister Paul

Sister Paul grew up in Detroit, Michigan, one of eight children, five girls and three boys. Her faith took root early in a family that lived a deeply Catholic life. The children attended Mass every Sunday, prayed evening rosaries and had parents who never missed daily Mass.

Her childhood memories are full of playfulness. Sister Paul fondly recalls catching polliwogs in the pond with her friends. Detroit winters were harsh, she says with a smile, but “As long as you were dressed for it, you were okay.” Her father worked as a branch manager for Walt Disney and was responsible for making sure films reached theaters on time. As a child, she would sit in the balcony and watch movies, her favorite being *Pollyanna* with Hayley Mills.

Just a block from her home, and right across the street from her school, stood the Home of the Little Sisters of the Poor. Sister Paul and her siblings often volunteered there as teenagers. “The Sisters were always so cheerful and I thought to myself, I want to be one of them,” she remembers. “I loved helping older people.” That desire blossomed into a vocation and in 1962, right after high school, she entered the Little Sisters of the Poor. Two of her sisters followed the same path.

Sister Paul was one of the very first Little Sisters to arrive when Villa Guadalupe was established in 1983. At that time, the Home consisted of just one building (the convent) and two small cottages, one for men and one for women. Everything was new, full of possibility and Sister Paul remembers feeling grateful and excited to be part of the foundation of something that would grow into a place of deep love and care.

One of her earliest memories from those days is of the very first Resident, Frances Curley, from Thoreau. “We found her wandering along the road and brought her to the Home.” Sister Paul recalls. “We contacted her family to let them know she was safe.” It’s a moment in time that has stayed with Sister Paul all these years, a reminder of the mission of the Little Sisters.

Having served with joy in several Homes over the years, Sister Paul says that Villa Guadalupe has always held a distinct place in her heart. She has returned to Gallup at least three times throughout her vocation. “Every time I came back to Gallup, it was exciting,” Sister Paul says. “Gallup has always been special.” She appreciates the uniqueness of Villa Guadalupe being smaller, more intimate and home to Residents with a wide range of backgrounds and stories. That diversity has shaped Sister Paul’s approach to caregiving.

After a lifetime of caring for the elderly, Sister Paul’s greatest lesson is simple and profound. “Meet (the Residents) at their level. Find out where they come from and understand that you can’t change them.”

She said that God has taught her patience and a deep love



Sr. Paul, third sister from the left, pictured with the Home’s first Sisters and Residents in 1983.

for the elderly, especially those who need help with even the smallest daily tasks.

If she had to sum up Villa Guadalupe in one sentence, she says, “There is a need in the area.” Sister Paul has spent her life joyfully responding to that need.

In April, Sister Paul will celebrate 64 years of religious life. May God bless her for her dedication to the elderly. We honor not only her remarkable longevity but the spirit with which she has lived her vocation full of joy, patience, faithfulness and a willingness to serve. Sister Paul’s story is a reminder of the heart of our mission.

The generosity of our donors sustains Villa Guadalupe. We are deeply grateful for your support which makes it possible for Sister Paul and all the Little Sisters of the Poor to continue the beautiful work which our foundress, St. Jeanne Jugan, began more than a century and a half ago.

WELCOME TO THE HOME OF LOVE!

Resident reminisces on faith, family and blessings

Carol Williams was born and raised in St. Louis, Missouri, a place filled with memories of family and faith. Carol has always been grateful to her parents for baptizing her when she was one month old, realizing as she grew older that her Catholic faith was a great gift from God and from them.

Her first job in high school was working as a secretary for Fr. Miller, the director of the St. Louis Catholic High School Office for the St. Louis Archdiocese. Carol worked at a couple of office jobs in the next few years. She married at the age of 23 and was blessed with a daughter, Therese, who now lives in Santa Fe, New Mexico.

One of Carol's favorite memories comes from her early years in St. Louis, when she met a young, eighteen-year-old Barbra Streisand. Barbra was fresh off winning a talent show in New York City on Jack Paar's Tonight Show. Carol's husband, Jim Williams, was a musical director and pianist accompanying Barbra at the Crystal Palace nightclub when Carol met her at their rehearsal. That night, after her first performance, Barbra ran straight to Carol and asked how she liked her act. Carol smiled, hugged her and whispered in her ear, "Oh Barbra, you're going to make it BIG!!!!" It was one of many amazing moments that marked Carol's eventful life long before she ever arrived at Villa Guadalupe.

Carol was a personal secretary to Milton K. Harrington, CEO of Charm Craft Publishers and owner of 14 greeting card companies. She served in this role for 14 years. "He was the kindest boss I ever had," she recalls with a smile. After his death, she founded her own company, Carol Williams Printing Company, which she ran for 12 years. She even purchased an AB Dick printing press and learned to run it.

In later years, she helped and lived with her elderly mother near St. Louis in Weldon Springs, MO, on a small,

beautiful lake with swans. When Carol's mother underwent heart surgery, the two shared a deep bond strengthened by faith and daily life together. Carol adds that her mother was the best cook ever. "We helped each other out!" she says.

When her mother passed away, Carol continued her professional life, selling her small business to become the city clerk in Weldon Spring. After that, she worked in office management for the Catholic radio station WRYT St. Louis, MO, until her retirement.

Faith has always been the center of Carol's life. While in St. Louis, she immersed herself in the Legion of Mary, serving as president of the Senior, Junior, and Teen Legion of Mary. She cherishes the friendships she formed over the years through the Legion of Mary. A good friend, Father Boesen, of St. Louise de Marillac in St. Louis, once told her, "Becoming a Legion of Mary member is your ticket to Heaven!"

She had the blessed experience of traveling to the Vatican to see Pope John Paul II beatify Mother Teresa of Calcutta. Carol became a yearly vowed Lay Missionary of Charity of Mother Teresa's order for 11 years.

Music is an important part of Carol's world. She taught piano for nine years and every night after her prayers, she listens to "Angels on High" by the Robert Shaw Chorale, a habit she has kept for the last 15 years. She also loves Beethoven, Chopin, classical music, spiritual choral music and modern jazz, a connection to her ex-husband, who

'Everyone is so loving, nice and friendly. I feel like we are living in the Lord's home.'



was a jazz musician.

Carol spent 12 years as a Resident with the Little Sisters in St. Louis until the Home closed and then she moved to Villa Guadalupe in Gallup. She came here so she could be closer to her daughter and has been part of the Gallup family for seven years. She tells all her friends, family, and visitors, "Welcome to the home of love!!!" She adds, "Jesus in His Tabernacle is the center of our home." Carol shares that she has such joy and love in her heart for the Little Sisters of the Poor and for the Lord.

The daily Mass and the rosary in the chapel remain her favorite times of day, moments of peace and grounding. She loves the atmosphere at Villa Guadalupe, sharing, "Everyone is so loving, nice and friendly. I feel like we are living in the Lord's home." Although moving to the upper cottage temporarily for a couple of months has been an adjustment, she continues to embrace community life with grace.

Carol's hobbies bring joy to both herself and others. She likes creating musical birthday videos for her family and friends, sending her creations via the internet, a tradition that has become her signature gift. "Creating videos keeps me young at heart!" she says. She also enjoys participating in plays at Villa Guadalupe.

Today, Carol continues to find joy in the simple beauty of daily life with the Little Sisters. "Being with my daughter Therese, the Sisters, Residents and visitors makes me smile because I feel so blessed!" she says. And when it comes to meals, to Carol, "Nothing beats roast beef with mashed potatoes, gravy and green beans," one of the comforting dishes offered at Villa Guadalupe.

Carol's life is a tapestry woven with faith, music, friendship and love. We are grateful she shares her light with the Villa Guadalupe family in Jesus' Home of Love.



Our Valentine's Day Ticket to Paris

It was a delightful afternoon in Paris without jetlag, lost luggage or other travel woes. The Villa Guadalupe auditorium was transformed into an inspired Parisian runway as Residents, Sisters and staff gathered on Valentine's Day for a fashion show. And what a show it was!

Residents took center stage and from the very first step onto the "catwalk," the room filled with cheers, smiles and applause. Residents brought their own flair to the runway. Some strutted with confidence, others giggled their way down the aisle and a few couldn't resist breaking into

dance as the music played. Their personalities sparkled and dazzled more than any glamour and glitz Paris could offer. Smiles illuminated the room brighter than any spotlight, turning the event into such a memorable party.

It was a family celebration that was loved by the Residents, staff, Sisters and volunteers. Merriment and cheers filled the room as Residents twirled, posed and showed off their Paris-themed looks. It was a reminder of how much happiness comes from simply being together and sharing an enjoyable afternoon filled with friendship and joy.



A NOTE FROM MOTHER

Dear Families, Friends and Benefactors,

Greetings of fraternal peace and love to each one of you in the Most Holy Name of Jesus.

I am grateful to have this beautiful season of Lent each year to remind me of the importance of forgiveness, conversion and genuine love of neighbor in my daily living as a Little Sister of the Poor.

Villa Guadalupe continues to be a little ray of Christ's light to welcome the Elderly Poor and all those who stop by to pay us a visit along their journeys. This is made possible by the many blessings of God's Divine Providence through your continued prayerful and financial support.

The repairs to solve the water intrusion into the walls of our apartments are underway. The work is scheduled to be completed by July and then we will begin the interior renovations of our 12 apartments. At that time, our current five Residents can return to their apartments and we can start to admit new Residents. Every day we pray for the safety of all working on this project and for its completion in a timely manner.

Since my last letter, our Residents continue to be the recipients of so many acts of kindness. We are grateful to those involved with Adopt an Elder Christmas Tree, groups and families of all ages sending gifts, coming to entertain, serving meals to the Residents or visiting one-on-one. The thoughtfulness extended to our Residents is appreciated very much.

"Blessed be God. Thank you, God." is a heartfelt praise of everyone here at Villa Guadalupe.

Our profound and grateful daily prayers continue to accompany you, especially the sick and the suffering and those who mourn the loss of loved ones. May God's peace be with you, with our world and with us always.

In Christ's Peace,
Mother Theresa Louisa, l.s.p.



Save the Date

Spaghetti Fundraiser

Friday, May 1

Join us for pasta and smiles, as we gather in support of the renovation of our apartments. This event enables us to continue providing for the safety, accessibility and quality of life for the Residents we serve. We look forward to seeing you there!

For more information, please call 505-863-6894.



Ways to Give

General Gifts

Either one time or sign up online for a recurring gift of any amount at the frequency you choose.

Tribute Gift

In honor of someone for a birthday, anniversary or other special occasion.

Memorial Gift

In memory of a loved one or friend.

Planned Giving

Bequests have been one of the most meaningful sources of funds for the mission of the Little Sisters of the Poor.

Through the generosity of so many, the Little Sisters have been blessed to continue their work for the elderly. Consider making a legacy gift to the Little Sisters of the Poor through a Living Trust, Charitable Remainder Trust, Life Insurance Beneficiary, Retirement Plan Beneficiary or a provision in your Will.

Visit our website: littlesistersofthepoorgallup.org

Thank you for your generosity!

