



Eulogy of Sister Lou Anglin, BVM
Mary Frances Clarke Chapel, June 3, 2022

Good morning. It is good for us to gather to celebrate the life of our Sister Lou Anglin.

Mary Lou Anglin was born Dec. 4, 1960, in Dubuque, Iowa, to John “Jack” and Laverne (Mahoney) Anglin. She joined a brother Robert and a sister Diane with a brother Patrick completing the family. Her parents were from Otter Creek, Iowa and her mother now resides at Mt. Carmel Bluffs in Dubuque.

Lou attended elementary school at St. Anthony in Dubuque, St. Patrick in Epworth, and St. John the Baptist in Peosta, Iowa. She completed her secondary education at Western Dubuque High School in Epworth. Lou recalled: “I first met the BVM sisters when I entered first grade at St. Anthony in Dubuque, Iowa. . . Even at that early age I was impressed by them and the way of life they had chosen.” She graduated from Clarke College in 1983 with a bachelor's degree in political science with a history minor. “Since being at Clarke the last four years I have come to appreciate [the BVM] lifestyle even more. I have also come to know and love some of the sisters, have seen the good that they do, and the faith that they live so fervently.”

After graduating from Clarke, Lou served as a junior high teacher at St. Joseph School in New Hampton, Iowa, where she formed more BVM connections with the sisters teaching in the school. On July 16, 1985, she entered the congregation and began her formation while teaching at St. Joseph ES in Holy Trinity, Ala. “. [I] have learned so much . . . [seeing] the poor living conditions of people around us, working with black people, and learning a bit of life in the South, [it] has been a marvelous gift to me.”

She was received into the novitiate on Sept. 13, 1986. After one year of study at the Motherhouse, she completed the second year of novitiate at DePorres Consolidated School in St. Louis where she taught junior high students. She professed first vows on July 16, 1988. After profession, Lou returned for a second year at DePorres which was followed by teaching upper elementary grades at St. Bartholomew in St. Louis and later at St. Elizabeth of Hungary in Crestwood, Mo, a ministry that she jokingly referred to as “my paid sabbatical,” but never in front of the principal. Lou was a dedicated teacher who carried out her many responsibilities with a loving acceptance of young people – She was often heard encouraging others to “love ‘em up.” Lou possessed a balanced sense of humor and a spirit of friendship and cooperation with other faculty members.

After professing final/perpetual vows on July 16, 1994, Lou received a renewal grant to earn a master’s degree in pastoral studies from the Institute of Pastoral Studies at Loyola University - Chicago. For the next nine years, she served as theology teacher and campus minister at Nerinx Hall HS in Webster Groves, Mo. “I was attracted by the BVMs I met who were very alive and seemed to get so much of their energy from prayer and helping other people. They were happy people and at the same time were challenging me to help whoever needed it.”

Lou generously shared her musical talent playing guitar and singing at congregational liturgical celebrations. While in St. Louis, she used her musical talents at monthly liturgy for female prisoners at the St. Louis Workhouse. She always served with a willing and loving heart.

Lou treasured community and the impact of the many wonderful people had on her relationship with God. Lou reflected: "I don't think it would be the same in any other lifestyle the feeling of being called to this and the 'rightness' of it all." "For me it comes down to answering a call that I cannot not respond to. It doesn't always make sense, it's often painful, it has brought me much joy, it has caused me to grow a lot as a person, and it seems to be what God wants of me."

Lou served on the Initial Membership Committee from 2003 to 2015, in 2006 she participated in the Institute for Religious Formation at Catholic Theological Union in Chicago and, with Kathy Carr, became a coordinator of the Office of Initial Membership in 2007. Following a sabbatical year, she was elected congregational vice-president in 2016 and reelected in 2021.

Lou was a quiet, sincere, and compassionate woman: a beautiful spirit with a sense of responsibility and accountability. As the Council liaison with Mount Carmel, she spent time with sisters and addressed concerns of the staff. She possessed a gift of deep sensitivity. During the pandemic, Lou's concern for all found her walking the hallways to check on each one at least once a week. She connected social justice with everyday life; at the same time, she had an active concern for a world in need of healing.

Lou was generous in sharing her time, understanding, and wisdom. Being introverted, she quietly held her personal feelings close. If the issue was a matter of justice and respect, she did not hesitate to offer an honest and loving response. The Officers always appreciated her candid comments and her ability to add perspective to a tedious task. Of particular note was the annual selection of the congregational Christmas card- what picture would we use, what verse would fit, what greeting reflected the signs of the times? Lou let it be known that this was not a life-giving task; she "valued relationships, people came first."

Her personality made Lou a comfortable person to be around. She possessed an inner strength to handle life peacefully. She entered into deep friendships with others – friends, staff and sisters. Lou had a wonderful capacity to enjoy life and leisure. She appreciated beauty. She loved to vacation at the Two Spiders Lodge in Wisconsin spending time at the dock reading in the sun. When it was her night to cook, guacamole and chips started the meal, and her infamous caramel brownies were served as dessert. Lou enjoyed the ritual for good-byes from the Spiders which began with hugs all around. As the car started up the drive, all would wave with Kleenex in hand until it disappeared over the hill. When the opportunity arose to manage the house, Lou took on the responsibilities of coordinating a team to prepare the house for summer guests and closing it for the season in early fall. She knew who to call for maintenance needs and oversaw repairs.

Lou was a member of the MARCH MADNESS Group from its founding, annually bringing together those who entered in small sets or singly after 1971. It provided an opportunity to get to know one another, develop community building skills, and have honest conversations. The group often met at the BVM Center. Lou's sense of hospitality shone brightly. When Mary Ellen McDonagh resided at Marian Hall, she made sure that Mary Ellen could be present for the gathering. Lou loved to shop for the snacks and beverages for the gathering, assuring that no one would go hungry.

As a member of the Clarke Crusader's Women's Basketball team, Lou continued her life-long exercise regimen. Until recently, Lou could be sighted daily, walking along Grandview, stopping to visit with neighbors and passers-by. It was because of shortness of breath during these walks that she discovered her first bout with cancer. She was a model to all her friends and associates on how to care for oneself. She enjoyed practicing Yoga, blending self-awareness and meditation as an outgrowth of her rich and deep prayer life. "I am continually amazed at God's very real presence in my life."

Reflecting on her life as a BVM, Lou commented: "I knew from my family that I could live a generous life without becoming a sister. But I did feel drawn to share life with others who were committed to living justly and being of service, who valued prayer and living simply. It just seemed like something I was supposed to do. . . While I hope I

have been of service and have given something worthwhile over the years, I know I have been given a great deal more. I have formed friendships with all kinds of people, have had opportunities to deepen my spirituality, and have been shown a much bigger world. . . “My ministry on the community’s Initial Membership team is walking with people as they try to figure out what they are supposed to do. . . Much of my ministry consists of providing people with opportunities to slow down, to listen to where God is leading them, and to share with them what living in community has meant to me. . . “I don’t know what the [future] will hold, but I [go forward] . . . with a profound sense of gratitude and trust that what I’m supposed to do will continue to unfold.”

Today as we celebrate the life of our daughter, our sister, our colleague, our dear friend we gather and in one great voice proclaim: “We are Grateful.”