

Sister Ruth Anne Berry, OSF

Sister Ruth Anne (Norma Clare) Berry entered eternal life on February 4, 2026, at San Damiano Convento, Aparecida de Goiânia, Goiás, Brazil, South America. She was 93 years old and a member of the Sisters of St. Francis of Mary Immaculate for 77 years.

Sister Ruth Anne was born in Shelby, Ohio, where she attended Most Pure Heart of Mary Elementary School before entering the Joliet Franciscans. She graduated from St. Francis Academy in 1949 and received her BA in Music from the College of St. Francis in 1961, recognized as an accomplished harpist. In her early years of teaching (1951-1956) Sister Ruth was the parish organist and elementary school teacher in Chicago and Joliet, Illinois. In the early 1960s, in response to the call of Pope John XXIII for sisters to serve the church in Latin America, Sr. Ruth was among the first four Joliet Franciscans to establish a mission in Brazil in 1963. She completed an intensive Portuguese language and culture course at the Center for Intercultural Formation, Petropolis, in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil. Soon thereafter, in December of 1963, the mission in Santa Helena de Goiás was established.

Sharing her many gifts and her musical skills, Sister Ruth took on new adventures in teaching, pastoral ministry and the formation of young women desiring to become Franciscans. She eventually served in leadership roles for the Joliet Franciscans in Brazil and for the Center for Franciscan Pastoral Studies in Latin America. Sister Ruth continued her ministry in leadership, formation, and pastoral ministry. She was recognized and honored by the Franciscan Federation of the United States (2005) with the *Peacemaker Award* for her fidelity and enhancement of the mission and her ability to bring hope, peace and love to those with whom she lived and ministered.

Sister Ruth was preceded in death by her two brothers Dorwin, Jr. and Richard, her sister Jeanne and her sisters-in-law, Lois and Evelyn. She is survived by her two brothers William of South Bend, Indiana, James of Palm Springs, California, and her sister-in-law Constance as well as many nieces, nephews, relatives and friends.

The Mass of Christian Burial for Sister Ruth Anne Berry was held Tuesday, February 5, 2026, in Brazil, followed by interment at the *Cemitério Parque Memorial de Goiânia*, in Goiás, Brazil. A Memorial Mass to celebrate the life and legacy of Sister Ruth Anne Berry will be held locally at St. Patrick's Residence Chapel, 1400 Brookdale Road, Naperville, Illinois 60563, on Monday, April 27 at 10:00 A.M., followed by a Sharing of Memories. All are welcome.

If you would like to make a donation in honor of Sister Ruth Anne Berry or another Joliet Franciscan Sister, please send your memorial to the Sisters of St. Francis of Mary Immaculate, 1433 Essington Road, Joliet, Illinois, 60435.