

December 10

Sister Frances Paula Dietz  
1907-1987

Sister Frances Paula Dietz prided herself on being known as a "Bewick Kid," the street in Annunciation parish from which many religious vocations originated. Like many east-side Detroiters Dorothy Dietz came from a devout family of Irish-German descent. The family numbered seven children: four girls and three boys, the youngest of whom became Reverend Francis Dietz of the Detroit diocese. To her mother, Anna Casey, from Urbana, Ohio, Sister attributes the spiritual leadership of the household: her deep faith, the family devotions to the rosary and first Fridays, etc. Her father, Anthony Dietz, always a model Catholic, instilled into his children a love of learning, an appreciation for classical music, and a reverence for a "fine set of values."

Catherine Dorothy --- known by her second name --- was baptized in old St. Joseph Church, enrolled in Our Lady of Help School for the primary grades, later as they moved farther from the inner city, she attended and was graduated from Annunciation High School in 1925. The following fall she enrolled at Detroit Teacher's College. After she had attained her teaching certificate, she taught one year at Finney School in Detroit. In May, 1928, she made a retreat given by Father John McClorey, S.J. During this time of reflection Dorothy made a final decision regarding her vocation. On the last day of June, 1928, she and her dear friend and next-door neighbor, Eileen Keane, later Sister Annella, entered the Postulate. Together they received the habit the following January, professed temporary vows in 1931 and final vows in 1934. In the meantime Sister Frances Paula completed her degree requirements and became an enthusiastic teacher. She was critic-teacher in the grades both at Sacred Heart Institute in Monroe and at Gesu in Detroit. Because she obtained her B.A. so early in religious life she was able to take summer courses to prepare herself to meet North Central requirements in a variety of fields.

She was engaged in high school in many parts of Michigan as well as in Akron, Ohio and Westchester, Illinois.

In 1950 she was granted a Masters in Education from Wayne State University. Thereafter we find her enrolled in a variety of advanced courses, workshops, in a Theology program conducted by the Dominican fathers, and in library science. She assisted in revamping the Social Studies courses, she sometimes taught Adult Education courses in the evening and yet found time to write a few articles for publication. Besides these varied academic pursuits, Sister Frances Paula taught CCD classes on Saturday, Sunday, or after school and occasionally a Bible class in the summer. She was interested in Sodality work and most enthusiastic in her support of home and foreign missions.

Sister Frances Paula retired to the Motherhouse in 1973. At first she continued teaching: tutoring in the Adult Education Center. But the activity in her declining years that claimed much of her time was sewing for the poor of Indian missions, and for the hobby shop for the benefit of the IHM Retirement Fund.

At last a severe heart attack put a stop to all activities. For a few final years Sister had the opportunity to pray for the Community and to grow in God's love and grace while serving the Sisters in her unit in Liguori. Her death came rather suddenly on December 10, 1987. Father Dietz offered the Mass of Resurrection on December 14.