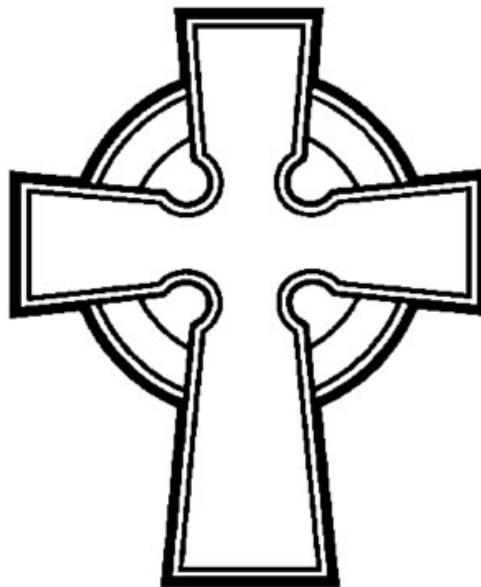


Breastplate of St. Patrick

Christ beside me,
Christ before me,
Christ behind me,
Christ within me,
Christ beneath me,
Christ above me.
Christ on my right hand,
Christ on my left,
Christ where I lie,
Christ where I sit,
Christ where I rise.
Christ in the hearts of all
Who think of me,
Christ in the mouths of all
Who speak to me,
Christ in every eye
That sees me,
Christ in every ear
That hears me.

“ Following Christ . . . I offer my life
for the Church and the salvation
of the World . . . ”

From FMM Formula of Vows



*“Life’s journey is to
God’s eternal Day . . .
For in Life and in death,
We belong to the Lord!”*



Mary Philomena Fogarty
(M. (Coirle))
Born: Nov. 2, 1935
Entered: March 10, 1953
Novitiate: Sept. 17, 1953
First Vows: Sept. 17, 1955
Final Vows: Sept 17, 1958
Entered into Eternal Life:
Mar. 25, 2003
In the 50th year of
Religious Life

Early Years

Philomena was the eldest of three daughters born to Patrick and Margaret Fogarty, in Cork, Ireland. It was here she spent her early years and did her schooling. Philomena met our Sisters through the FMM Commissioners who went to Cork.

God's Call

Philomena entered the Institute of the Franciscan Missionaries of Mary, Loughlynn, Co. Roscammon, Ireland, March 10, 1953. She pronounced her first vows September 17, 1955 and her final vows March 17, 1958 in Coldash, England..

Missionary Life

After completing studies in London, she was missioned to Kobe, Japan to teach in Stella Maris International School. She later became the principal of this school.

Her former students testify that not only was she an excellent teacher, albeit strict, she instilled in them spiritual values, which have remained in them all their lives. Many of her former students sent flowers in her memory and some were present at her funeral.

In 1974, she was missioned to the USA where she did advanced studies and then taught in Espirito Santo School, Fall River, Massachusetts.

Again, her students as well as other teachers recall her as a dedicated, excellent teacher.

In 1980, she was sent to Hamilton Georgia where she continued her teaching as well as other pastoral ministries. In 1987, she became a Pastoral Assistant and Administrator of Christ the King Mission Church where she served these past 16 years

She was awarded the "I Make a Difference in Harris County" award, which is presented to an individual who goes out of her way to improve the lives of all or any persons in Harris County, Georgia. She was highly esteemed by the people of Harris County for her unwavering dedication to helping the people around her. She was a member of FOCUS (Fellowship of Christians United for Service), which is an interdenominational organization, which combines the resources of 64 churches in Harris County, to help the poor. She helped to raise funds and participated in the many good works of FOCUS such as repairing homes for the sick and elderly, providing healthcare for children, food drives for families and senior citizens. She was active on the Child Abuse Prevention Council as well as in the Habitat for Humanity of the Tri-county area.

One article that described her diverse activities on behalf of others ended with the statement: " Few

people have touched so many lives, and made such a positive difference with that touch, as Sister Philomena."

The media here and abroad covered extensively the circumstances of her tragic death. One of the websites contained testimonies of many who had benefited from her selfless gift of loving service.

Memorial services were held in both Georgia and in Providence during which there was standing room only.

Throughout the days of pain and sorrow, Franciscan Missionaries of Mary were aware of the faith of all those who participated at all the services. They experienced a strong sense of forgiveness and love, which held everyone together. In the midst of all the horror, there was a search to give expression to God's unlimited love and forgiveness—recognizing both truth and charity.. the requirements of justice. In a television interview after Philomena's funeral and burial, FMMs again emphasized forgiveness. Philomena's last words to her abductor, as best we know were, "I forgive you." Now, she is with the One who while hanging on the cross, uttered these same words.

