

Sr. M. Therese Dush, CA

September 18, 1931 to April 27, 2015



Sister M. Therese Dush, CA was born on September 18, 1931 and died on Monday, April 27th, 2015. She is survived by her brother and sister-in-law, Joseph and Anna Dush and many nieces and nephews. She is preceded in death by her parents, Clyde and Margaret (Collins) Dush, and her brothers, Leroy Dush and William Dush.

She grew up in Irishtown, PA and her Catholic faith was nurtured by her parents and her involvement in her home parish of St. Bonaventure in Grampian. As a young person she enjoyed square dances and playing the base fiddle in her father's country band.

At age 17, she answered God's call to become a Catholic sister and entered the Sisters of Mercy in the Diocese of Erie on June 25, 1949. She received a BS Degree in Elementary Education at Mercyhurst College in Erie and taught grade school in many parish schools in the Diocese of Erie, as well as religious education for students of all levels. She went on to obtain a Master's degree in Administration Elementary Education. She loved children and young people and impacted the lives of thousands of them through her years as a teacher and grade school principal (St Catherine's in DuBois and St. Francis in Clearfield).

Sr. Therese had a great love for the poor and loved people right where she found them. She began her missionary outreach to the poor with Erie Diocese youth first in Kentucky in 1972 and then founded Young People Who Care Mission in Clearfield County in 1976. She was the visionary leader of Young People Who Care for almost 40 years. She began this mission to provide direct services to the poor in their homes. In the following years she expanded its services to include Marian House, an emergency shelter for women and children, two Life Line offices serving the needs of pregnant women and infants, a used clothing outlet, and Bethany Adult and Youth Retreat Centers in Frenchville. She completed both a Master's degree in Counseling through Penn State and also Formation in Spiritual Direction from the Jesuit Renewal Center in Cincinnati. As a spiritual director and also a counselor, she helped transform the lives of many adults in the areas of spiritual and personal growth. Her guidance and inspiration also helped to found the Susquehanna Rural Free Clinic in Frenchville.

Out of the Young People Who Care Mission, she founded the religious community, the Community of Anawim, in 1984 and transferred her religious vows to this new community while still remaining closely associated with the Sisters of Mercy.

Sr. Therese's legacy can be found in the thousands of lives touched and changed - - the children she taught in her many years of teaching, the young people and volunteers she inspired to live out the Gospel challenge of service to others in her years of Mission work at Young People Who Care, the poor whose lives were made better, the prisoners to whom she taught prayer and brought the Gospel, and the adults for whom she served as

Spiritual Director and Retreat Director through Bethany Retreat Center. She truly lived out her ring motto of “Love can do all things.”

She is greatly loved will be missed by all who had the privilege to know her. May her dynamic and faith filled life continue to inspire others. Love indeed can do all things.