

Mother Teresa Margaret, foundress of the Carmelite Monastery in Traverse City , died Sunday evening, feast of the Most Holy Trinity, surrounded by her religious community. She was 101, and had been a cloistered nun for 83 years.

Zoe Julia Armstrong was born in Columbus, Ohio on September 8, 1911 to Edward and Zoe (Goulet) Armstrong. The oldest of six children, she attended St. Joseph's Academy in Columbus, and enjoyed piano, dance, and basketball. At the age of 18 she entered the Carmelite Monastery in Grand Rapids, and pronounced her vows of obedience, poverty, and chastity two years later in 1931.

In 1949 she was chosen to begin a new monastery in Traverse City, which was founded on February 1, 1950 in a remodeled house on Peninsula Drive. Ten years later the community moved into a permanent monastery built on Silver Lake Road according to plans drawn by Mother herself.

She served as Prioress of the monastery from 1950 to 1963 and from 1973 to 1997, and then as Subprioress and Council Sister. She transitioned from vigorous activity to old age with remarkable gracefulness. Until her brief final illness, she participated in all the activities of her religious community.

Mother had a gift for making lifelong friendships, a passion for imbuing our culture with Christian ideals, and an enviable balance of faith, serenity, humor, and common sense.

She is survived by her sister Marion Holland of Sandpoint, Idaho, sister-in-law Pat Armstrong of Columbus, and numerous nieces and nephews. She was preceded in death by her brothers Edward, Albert and Robert, her sister Rose Marie, and all of the original founding nuns of the monastery.

Visitation will be held in the Carmelite Monastery Chapel on Thursday, May 30 beginning at 10:30am, where a Rosary will be prayed at 7pm, with Rev. Anthony Cureton officiating. Visitation will continue on Friday from 8am until the Mass of Christian Burial at 11am. The Most Reverend Bernard A. Hebda will serve as the celebrant.

Memorials may be directed to Mass intentions.

*Eternal rest grant unto her, O Lord, and let perpetual light shine upon her,
may she and all the souls of the faithful departed,
through the mercy of God, rest in peace.
Amen.*