

SISTER PATRICIA (Gabrielle) BINKO, CSJ

August 20, 1934 ~ June 4, 2016

Patricia Binko was born on August 20, 1934, at Deaconess Hospital in Minneapolis to John Frank Binko and Agnes Knoll Binko. She attended St. Bridget's Grade School and St. Anthony High School in Minneapolis. As Pat and her brother Jerry were growing up, their parents realized that they were both musically inclined, so they persuaded them to take violin lessons from Sister Francis, a Benedictine Sister, at St. Bridget's.

Toward the end of her senior year, Pat felt called to religious life and in 1952 she entered the Sisters of St. Joseph and was given the name Gabrielle. In the 1960's, when Sisters could return to their baptismal name, she went back to Patricia.

Her first assignment was St. Agatha's Conservatory where she began studying piano and worked in the refectory. She went on to teach music at Mary Hall in St. Paul, Ascension School in Minneapolis and Good Shepherd School in Golden Valley. She continued her education at the College of St. Catherine and at the University of North Dakota where she earned her BA and MED. Pat became a teacher and String Director to students from kindergarten through sixth grade for the next seven years, including a year at a private Suzuki school in Grand Forks public schools.

Pat wanted to be a teacher and her violin background gave her the desire to teach violin. In 1984 she went to Japan where she studied the Suzuki method under the well-known Dr. Shinichi Suzuki. She lived with the Sisters of St. Joseph in Tsu for three years, taught English and began to learn the Japanese language. In 1986 she returned to St. Paul, and was so enthusiastic about teaching the Suzuki method, that she started her own Suzuki Talent Education School for Strings at Carondelet Center, St. Stephen's Lutheran Church in West St. Paul as well as St. Anne's Episcopal Church in Sunfish Lake. At the time of her retirement she closed her schools having taught for more than fifty years.

Her legacy as a fine teacher lives on in many students she taught, some as young as three years old and many of whom continued on through high school. The school remained very prominent in the music profession due to the accomplishments of its students. As Dr. Suzuki told her, "The world will be saved one violin at a time."

Pat was a member of the Woodbury Chorus and Orchestra for eleven years. In 1998 she had the privilege of traveling to Europe to perform with the Woodbury Chorus and Orchestra. Later, the group honored Pat for her dedication and talent in serving the organization as a violinist, concert mistress and rehearsal conductor. Gerrit Lamain, director of the Woodbury Chorus and Orchestra, requested that Pat perform Massenet's *Meditation from Thais* during Sunday concerts in Little Falls, Buffalo, Bird Island and Woodbury.

Pat enjoyed playing at many CSJ community events, liturgies, funerals and birthday gatherings. She shared her musical talent with CSJ musicians Sisters Mary Fran Carter, Mary Ann Hanley, and Mary Harroun, all of whom also enjoyed playing the violin and piano with Pat.

Before and during her retirement, Pat spent time at Timberlee, the Sisters summer vacation place, enjoying swimming, boating, walking the trails, playing cards, helping with daily chores and just enjoying life.

Pat moved to Carondelet Village in 2012 where she often could be found in the pool as a member of the "Esterettes" or entertaining the residents during several of the Talent Shows.

Pat is preceded in death by her parents John and Agnes and her brother Jerry. She is survived by her sister-in-law Nancy; nieces Kathy De Raimo and Jean Maczko; grandnieces, Madelaine and Ella Maczko; and grandnephew, Steven Binko.

Mass of Christian Burial was celebrated June 9 2016 in Our Lady of the Presentation Chapel. Interment followed in Resurrection Cemetery.

Pat, may you rest in peace and love.

Written by Miriam Shea, CSJ