

**REGIONAL FORMATION: SUMMER STUDY ON FRANCISCAN
SAINTS**

St. Saint Marianne Cope



Article written by:

Gloria Smith, OFS,

Councilor, St. Clare Region, Mo, USA

St. Saint Marianne Cope

Hello. My name is Gloria Jean Smith. I am a member of the St Francis of Assisi Fraternity of Oakville, Mo. I have been a Third Order Franciscan for about 11 years. I started my journey in mid Missouri in Joyful Servants Fraternity.

I chose Marianne Cope as my favorite Franciscan saint because she is a nurse and also was raised in Utica, NY. This happens to be my hometown and I am a registered nurse. Marianne was called to become a Sister of the Third Order of St Francis in 1862 and worked as a nurse in Syracuse, NY. She then heard the call to work among the Hawaiian people who had Hansen's disease in 1883. This disease is also called leprosy.

She and 5 other sisters came to Hawaii and worked on the main island and then on the island of Malachi with Fr. Damien. Being a nurse and having started several hospitals over her years as a nurse administrator, she went about setting up strict sanitary facilities to take care of her patients. These standards stopped the spread of the disease among the staff and other inhabitants. Even though Fr. Damien died of the disease, none of her staff contracted the disease. After 35 years on the island, she died of natural causes in 1918.

Marianne has a born leader. She knew what she wanted to do and she made sure that it was done right. She was a compassionate person as only a nurse can know. She loved what she did and was faithful to her calling. These are traits of the Holy Spirit. Her life as a religious person talks of loving God first and foremost. Love of neighbor secondary. She saw Jesus in the faces of the people with Hansen's disease.

Marianne Cope says a lot to me of what my life as a nurse and a Third Order Franciscan has been and still is. I have always seen Jesus in my patients' faces and also in the faces of people that I meet everywhere I go. That is who I am. I am a nurse. I am a Franciscan who follows St Francis. St Francis saw Jesus in everyone he met. I think reflecting on Saint Marianne Cope can lead someone to reflect on the face of Jesus.