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## Marianne Cope

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**Marianne Cope** *OSF*, also known as **Saint Marianne of Molokai**, (January 23, 1838 – August 9, 1918) was a German-born American **religious sister** who was a member of the **Sisters of St Francis of Syracuse, New York**, and administrator of its St. Joseph's Hospital in the city. Known also for her charitable works, in 1883 she relocated with six other sisters to Hawai'i to care for persons suffering **Hansen's Disease** on the island of **Molokai** and aid in developing the medical infrastructure in Hawai'i. Despite direct contact with the patients over many years, Cope did not contract the disease.

In 2005, Cope was beatified by Pope Benedict XVI.<sup>[1]</sup> Cope was declared a saint by the same pope on October 21, 2012, along with Kateri Tekakwitha, a 17th-century **Native American**.<sup>[2]</sup> Cope is the 11th person in what is now the United States to be canonized by the **Catholic Church**.<sup>[2]</sup>

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### Life

### Birth and vocation

Cope was baptized **Maria Anna Barbara Koob**, later anglicizing her last name to "Cope". She was born January 23, 1838, in Heppenheim in the Grand Duchy of Hesse to Peter Koob (1787–1862) and Barbara Wilzenbacher (1803–1872). The following year her family emigrated to the United States, settling in the industrial city of **Utica, New York**. They became members of the **Parish of St Joseph**, where Cope attended parish school. By the time she was in eighth grade, her father had become an invalid. As the oldest child, Cope left school to work in a textile factory to help support her family.<sup>[3]</sup> Her father became naturalized as an American citizen, which at the time meant the entire family received automatic citizenship status.<sup>[citation needed]</sup>

By the time their father Peter Cope died in 1862, the younger children in the family were of age to support themselves, so Maria pursued her long-felt **religious calling**. She entered the **noviliate** of the Sisters of the Third Order Regular of Saint Francis in **Syracuse, New York**. After a year of formation, Cope received the **religious habit** of the Franciscan Sisters along with the new name **Marianne**. She became first a teacher and then a principal in newly established schools for the region's **German-speaking** immigrants. Following the revolutions of 1848, numerous German immigrants entered the United States.<sup>[citation needed]</sup>

By 1870, Cope had become a member of the governing council of her **religious congregation**. She helped found the first two Catholic hospitals in Central New York, with charters stipulating that medical care was to be provided to all, regardless of race or creed. She was appointed by the **Superior General** to govern St. Joseph's Hospital, the first public hospital in Syracuse, serving from 1870-77.<sup>[citation needed]</sup>

As hospital administrator, Cope became involved with the move of **Geneva Medical College of Hobart College** from Geneva, New York, to Syracuse, where it became the **College of Medicine at Syracuse University**. She contracted with the college to accept their students for treating patients in her hospital, to further their medical education. Her stipulation in the contract—again unique for the period—was the right of the patients to refuse care by the students. These experiences helped prepare her for the special ministry she next pursued.<sup>[4]</sup>

### Call to Hawaii

In 1883, Cope, by then Superior General of the congregation, received a plea for help from King **Kalākaua** of Hawaii to care for **leprosy** sufferers. More than 50 religious congregations had already declined his request for Sisters to do this, because leprosy was considered to be highly contagious. She responded enthusiastically to the letter:

I am hungry for the work and I wish with all my heart to be one of the chosen Ones, whose privilege it will be, to sacrifice themselves for the salvation of the souls of the poor Islanders... I am not afraid of any disease, hence it would be my greatest delight even to minister to the abandoned 'lepers.'<sup>[5]</sup>

Cope departed from Syracuse with six other Sisters to travel to **Honolulu** to answer this call, arriving on November 8, 1883. They traveled on the ***SS Mariposa***. With Mother Marianne as supervisor, the Sisters' task was to manage **Kaka'ako Branch Hospital** on O'ahu, which served as a receiving station for Hansen's disease patients gathered from all over the islands. The more severe cases were processed and shipped to the island of **Molokai** for confinement in the settlement at Kalawao, and then later at **Kalaupapa**.

The following year, at the request of the government, Cope set up Malulani Hospital, the first general hospital on the island of **Maui**. Soon, she was called back to the hospital in **Oahu**. She had to deal with a government-appointed administrator's abuse of the leprosy patients at the Branch Hospital at Kakaako, an area adjoining Honolulu. She told the government that either the administrator had to be dismissed or the Sisters would return to Syracuse. She was given charge of the overcrowded hospital. Her return to Syracuse to re-assume governance of the congregation was delayed, as both the government and church authorities thought she was essential to the success of the mission.

Two years later, the king awarded Mother Marianne with the Cross of a Companion of the **Royal Order of Kapiolani** for her care of his people.<sup>[6]</sup> The work continued to increase. In November 1885, Cope opened the Kapiolani Home with the support of the government, to provide shelter to homeless female children of leprosy patients. The home was located on the grounds of a leprosy hospital because only the Sisters were willing to care for children so closely associated to people suffering from leprosy.

In 1887, a new government came into office. It ended the forced exile of leprosy patients to Molokai and closed the specialty hospital in Oahu. A year later, the authorities pleaded with Cope to establish a new home for women and girls on the Kalaupapa peninsula of Molokai. She accepted the call, knowing that it might mean she would never return to New York. "We will cheerfully accept the work..." was her response.<sup>[4]</sup>

### Molokai

In November 1888, Cope moved to Kalaupapa. She cared for the dying **Father Damien, SS.CC.**, who was already known internationally for his work in the leper colony, and began to take over his burdens. She had met him shortly after her arrival in Hawaii.

When Father Damien died on April 15, 1889, the government officially gave Cope charge for the care of the boys of Kalaupapa, in addition to her existing role in caring for the female residents of the colony. A prominent local businessman, **Henry Perrine Baldwin**, donated money for the new home. Mother Marianne and two assistants, Sister Leopoldina Burns and Sister Vincentia McCormick, opened and ran a new girls' school, which she named in Baldwin's honor. A community of **Religious Brothers** was sought to come and care for the boys. After the arrival of four **Brothers of the Sacred Heart** in 1895,<sup>[7]</sup> Cope withdrew the Sisters to the Bishop Home for leprous women and girls. Joseph Dutton was given charge of Baldwin House by the government.<sup>[citation needed]</sup>

### Death

Cope died on August 9, 1918, due to natural causes. She was buried on the grounds of the Bishop Home. In 2005, her remains were brought to Syracuse for reinterment at her **motherhouse**.<sup>[8]</sup> In 2014, her remains were returned to Honolulu and are enshrined at the **Cathedral Basilica of Our Lady of Peace**.<sup>[9][10]</sup>

### Legacy and honors

- 1927 — Saint Francis Hospital was founded in Honolulu in her memory as a community hospital and to train nurses to work with Hansen's disease patients.
- 1957 — St. Francis opened the Child Development Center at the Honolulu Community Church.
- 1962 — St. Francis Home Care Services was established, the first in Hawaii to specialize in home health care for Hawaiian people.
- 2006 — The Sisters of St. Francis chose to focus on long-term care, transferring the two facilities of St. Francis Hospital to a private board. The facilities are now known as the Hawaii Medical Center East in Liliha, and Hawaii Medical Center West in Ewa.<sup>[11]</sup> Both hospitals were closed at the end of 2011.<sup>[12]</sup> In August 2012, The Queen's Health Systems agreed to acquire the former Hawaii Medical Center West and reopen the hospital in the fall of 2013.<sup>[13]</sup>
- The Saint Francis School was founded in Mother Marianne's honor in 1924, operating as a girls-only school for grades 6-9.<sup>[14]</sup>

The community which Cope founded on Molokai continues to minister to the few patients afflicted with Hansen Disease. The Franciscan Sisters work at several schools and minister to parishioners throughout the Hawaiian Islands.

- On October 24, 2003, the **Congregation for the Causes of Saints** declared Mother Marianne to have been "heroically virtuous". In April 19, 2004, Pope **John Paul II** issued a papal decree declaring her **Venerable**.<sup>[citation needed]</sup>

### Beatification

In 1993, Katherine Delhia Mahoney was allegedly healed from multiple organ failure after praying to Marianne Cope for intercession. On December 20, 2004, after receiving the unanimous affirmation of the Congregation of the Causes of Saints, Pope John Paul II ordered a decree to be issued authenticating this recovery as a miracle to be attributed to the intercession of Mother Marianne. On May 14, 2005, Marianne was **beatified** in **Vatican City** by **Pope Benedict XVI** in his first **beatification** ceremony.

Over 100 followers from Hawai'i attended the beatification ceremony, along with 300 members of Cope's religious congregation in Syracuse. At the ceremony, presided over by **Cardinal José Saraiva Martins, C.M.F.**, the Hawaiian song "*Makalapua*" (a favorite of Cope) was sung.<sup>[15]</sup> Her **feast day** was established as January 23 and is celebrated by her own religious congregation, the **Diocese of Honolulu**, and the **Diocese of Syracuse**.

After the announcement by the **Holy See** of her impending beatification, during January 2005, Blessed Marianne's remains were moved to the **motherhouse** of the congregation in Syracuse. A temporary **shrine** was established to honor her. By 2009, the erection of a marble **sarcophagus** in the mother house chapel was complete. Her remains were interred in the new shrine on her feast day of January 23.<sup>[16]</sup>

In 2007, a statue of her was erected at St Joseph's Church in her native Utica, whose parish school she had attended in her childhood.<sup>[17]</sup>

### Canonization

On December 6, 2011, the **Congregation for the Causes of Saints** found that a second miracle could also be attributed to the intercession of Blessed Marianne. This finding was forwarded to **Pope Benedict XVI** by its Secretary, Cardinal **Angelo Amato**, for papal approval.<sup>[18]</sup> On December 19, 2011, Pope Benedict signed and approved the promulgation of the decree for Marianne's **sainthood** and she was **canonized** on October 21, 2012; a relic was carried to Honolulu from her mother church.

After **Father Damien**, Cope is the second person to be canonized who had served in the Hawaiian Islands. She was both the first Beatification and the last Canonisation under Pope Benedict XVI. In 2014, the church announced that the remains of Saint Marianne would be re-interred at the **Cathedral of Our Lady of Peace** in Honolulu, which was undergoing an extensive renovation. This is a more convenient location for the faithful than the **Kalaupapa National Historical Park** on Molokai, where access is primarily by plane or mule train. She sometimes attended Mass at the Cathedral and it was where Father Damien was ordained. The Franciscan Convent in New York which held her remains has had to move to a new location because its former buildings needed extensive repairs.<sup>[19]</sup>

### Ecumenical veneration

Cope is honored jointly with **Saint Damien of Molokai** on the liturgical calendar of the **Episcopal Church (USA)**. Their shared **feast day** is celebrated on April 15.

### In arts and media

**Paul Cox** directed the film ***Molokai: The Story of Father Damien*** (1999). Mother Marianne was portrayed by South African actress **Alice Krige**. **Father Damien** was portrayed by **David Wenham**.<sup>[20]</sup>

### See also

- List of American saints and beatified people

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- ↑ "Father Damien: The Leper Priest (1900)" *Internet Movie Database*. Retrieved 2010-07-21.

### Further reading

- Mary Laurence Hanley. O.S.F.; O. A. Bushnell (2009) [1980] [1980]. *Pilgrimage and Exile: Mother Marianne of Molokai* (2nd ed.). Mutual Publishing, LLC. ISBN 978-1-56647-916-5.

### External links

- Blessed Marianne Cope Canonization Director. "Blessed Marianne Cope Cause" Sisters of St Francis, Syracuse, New York. Retrieved March 19, 2010.
- Mother Marianne Cope at Find a Grave
- "Blessed Marianne Cope profile at the" *Catholic Saints Info*. Catholic Forum.

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Categories: 1838 births | 1918 deaths | People from Bergstraße (district) | Hessian emigrants to the United States | People from Utica, New York | Third Order Regular Franciscans | American Roman Catholic religious sisters and nuns | American nurses | American educators | Roman Catholic missionaries in Hawaii | Roman Catholic Diocese of Honolulu | American Roman Catholic missionaries | Female Roman Catholic missionaries | Franciscan missionaries | People from Molokai | Recipients of the Royal Order of Kapiolani | Burials in Hawaii | Burials in New York (state) | Beatifications by Pope Benedict XVI | American Roman Catholic saints | Franciscan saints | 19th-century Christian saints | 20th-century Christian saints | Leprosy nurses and caregivers | Christian female saints of the Late Modern era | Canonizations by Pope Benedict XVI | Venerated Catholics by Pope John Paul II | People from Kalawao County, Hawaii

<div>Saint</div> <div>Marianne Cope</div> <div>T.O.S.F.</div>	
<span></span> <div>Marianne Cope shortly before her departure for Hawaii (1883)</div>	
Virgin, Religious, Missionary to lepers	
Born	<div>Maria Anna Barbara Koob</div> January 23, 1838 <div>Heppenheim, Grand Duchy of Hesse</div> <span></span>
Died	August 9, 1918 (aged 80) <div>Kalaupapa, Hawai'i</div> <span></span>
Resting place	Cathedral Basilica of Our Lady of Peace, Honolulu, Hawaii
Venerated in	Roman Catholic Church (Sisters of St Francis of the Neumann Communities) Episcopal Church
Beatified	May 14, 2005, Saint Peter's Basilica, Vatican City by Pope Benedict XVI
Canonized	October 21, 2012, Vatican City by Pope Benedict XVI
Major shrine	Saint Marianne Cope Shrine & Museum <div>601 N. Townsend St.</div> <div>Syracuse, New York, U.S.</div> <span></span>
Feast	January 23 (Roman Catholic Church) <div>April 15 (Episcopal Church (United States))</div>
Patronage	Lepers, outcasts, those with HIV/AIDS, Hawai'i.



The Sisters of St. Francis, at the Kaka'ako Branch Hospital.



Walter Murray Gibson with the Sisters of St. Francis and daughters of Hansen's disease patients, at the Kaka'ako Branch Hospital.



Mother Marianne Cope beside the funeral bier of Father Damien



Mother Marianne Cope (in the wheelchair) only a few days before she died.



Scales used by Mother Marianne Cope and the Sisters to measure medicine, Kalaupapa, Hawaii, late 1880s



Mother Marianne Cope statue dedicated January 23, 2010, in Honolulu

<sup>[1]</sup> This page was last edited on 20 February 2018, at 14:25.

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