



**School Sisters  
of Notre Dame**  
Central Pacific Province

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
January 17, 2017

**Sister Joan (Vernon Marie) Bellew, SSND  
Former teacher, administrator and missionary**

**St. Louis** – Sister Joan Bellew, SSND, died Sunday, January 1, 2017, at DePaul Hospital in Bridgeton, Missouri. She was 79, and a former teacher, administrator and missionary.

The memorial Mass was celebrated Jan. 13 in the School Sisters of Notre Dame Theresa Center chapel in south St. Louis County. Burial was in the Sancta Maria in Ripa cemetery.

Sister Joan was born in Fort Madison, Iowa. She entered the congregation of the School Sisters of Notre Dame in 1955. She professed first vows in 1957 and final vows in 1963.

She earned a bachelor’s degree in mathematics in 1960 from the former Notre Dame College in St. Louis and a master’s in education in 1973 from Our Lady of the Lake University in San Antonio.

Sister Joan began her teaching career at Redemptorist High School in New Orleans. This experience was followed by teaching and administrative positions at St. Anthony in Effingham, Illinois; St. Gerard Regional High School in San Antonio, Texas; Thomas K. Gorman High School in Tyler, Texas; Sacred Heart in Morrilton, Arkansas; Notre Dame Secondary School in Sunyani, Ghana; and Notre Dame High School in Burlington, Iowa. She also served as the coordinator of community development for St. Mary of the Pines in Chatawa, Mississippi.



After several years of volunteer service at Our Lady of the Lake in Osage Beach, Missouri, she was missioned to Anna House in 2016.

She is survived by a brother Mike Bellew of Fort Madison, Iowa, sisters Patti Shores in New London, Iowa, Jan Wadle in Milo, Iowa and Ann Burghoffer in Bethlehem, Pennsylvania.

Memorial contributions may be made to the School Sisters of Notre Dame, Mission Advancement, 320 E. Ripa Ave., Saint Louis, MO, 63125-2897, or online at [www.ssndcentralpacific.org/Partner/Donation](http://www.ssndcentralpacific.org/Partner/Donation).

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**Sancta Maria in Ripa**  
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