

October 12, 2018

**Sister Ann Semel, SSND**  
**Educator, administrator, art ministry**

**Chatawa, Mississippi** – Sister Ann Semel, died Thursday, September 27, 2018, at St. Mary of the Pines, Chatawa, Mississippi. She was 86, and a former educator, administrator and was engaged in art ministry.

The funeral Mass was celebrated October 1 at St. Mary of the Pines, Chatawa, Mississippi. Burial was at the Chatawa Cemetery.

Sister Ann was born in New Orleans. She entered the School Sisters of Notre Dame in 1950 and professed first vows in 1953.

She received a bachelor's degree in 1960 from Notre Dame College in St. Louis. In 1963, she received a master's degree from the University of Notre Dame in New Orleans. She went on to earn a doctorate in English from the University of Notre Dame, New Orleans, in 1975.

After first profession, Sister Ann was missioned to Little Flower of Jesus School, New Orleans, where she served as a teacher and principal. She then was sent to teach English at St. Gerard High School in San Antonio.

In 1966, Sister Ann joined the English department at St. Mary's University in San Antonio. When she joined the department, she was one of just three women on campus and the first woman in the humanities department. She established a graduate program in English-Communication Arts and introduced a required course that looked at short stories from other cultures. During her time at St. Mary's, Sister Ann became a tenured professor, broadened the American literature courses to include minority authors, was elected department chair, served for many years as director of the department's graduate program and mentored many students. She was published in a number of periodicals and was co-editor of an American literature series. A volume of the 'Pecan Grove Review' was dedicated to Sister Ann in 2011, and a scholarship was established in her name. Sister Ann was a founding member of St. Mary's University President's Peace Commission and was an active advocate for peace and justice.

Sister Ann retired after 43 years of university teaching. She came to St. Mary of the Pines retirement community in 2012, remaining faithful in prayer and community activities.

Sister Ann is survived by her sisters in community, the School Sisters of Notre Dame. Memorial contributions may be made to the School Sisters of Notre Dame, Resource Development, P.O. Box 227275, Dallas, TX 75222-7275 or online at <https://www.ssndcentralpacific.org/give>.

