

March 2, 2019

Sister Eileen Donovan, SSND
Teacher, neighborhood organizer, social services

St. Louis – Sister Eileen Donovan, SSND, died at her local community residence in St. Louis, on Thursday, February 7, 2019. She was 78 and a former teacher, neighborhood organizer and involved in social services.

The memorial Mass was celebrated February 23 at Sancta Maria in Ripa, St. Louis. Sister Eileen donated her body to the St. Louis University School of Medicine.

Sister Eileen was born in Boston. She entered the congregation of the School Sisters of Notre Dame in 1958. She professed first vows in 1960 and final vows in 1966.

She received a bachelor's degree in history from the former Notre Dame College, St. Louis, in 1962; a master's degree in history from California State University, Long Beach, California, in 1972; a master's degree in counseling from the University of Missouri, St. Louis, in 1988; and a master's degree in Scripture from Aquinas Institute, St. Louis, in 1990.

Sister Eileen taught at St. Dominic Savio, St. Louis; St. Aloysius, Tulare, California; St. Marianne, Pico Rivera, California; Althoff Catholic High School, Belleville, Illinois; and Notre Dame Tutorial/Learning Center, St. Louis. She served as an assistant principal at Bishop Conaty High School, Los Angeles.

For over 25 years, Sister Eileen was an advocate for the poor and marginalized in St. Louis. She worked with the Penrose Park Neighborhood Association, managed the College Hill Neighborhood apartments and began the Renaissance Housing Corporation. She taught weekly bible classes and led religious services for inmates at the St. Louis medium security prison. She was an assistant program director at the St. Vincent de Paul Society in St. Louis; served as a counselor at the St. Clair County Mental Health Center in East St. Louis, Illinois; and was executive director of Our Lady's Inn, St. Louis. She received several awards for her work, including the Women of Achievement Award for Human Welfare sponsored by KMOX Radio and the Suburban Journals, and an outstanding achievement award from the Society of St. Vincent de Paul. Sister Eileen ran for the St. Louis School Board of Education in 1987 and served as the peace and justice coordinator for the Society of Mary.

Sister Eileen is survived by her sister Dorothy Donovan-Broderick, Rancho Mirage, California. She was preceded in death by her parents and brothers Daniel, William, James, Richard and Robert.

Memorial contributions may be made to the School Sisters of Notre Dame, Resource Development, 320 E. Ripa, St. Louis, MO 63125 or online at <https://www.ssndcentralpacific.org/give>.

