



Sister Marie Michelle Walsh, SSND
Aug. 15, 1926 – May 18, 2019



BALTIMORE - Sister Marie Michelle Walsh, SSND, died peacefully on May 18, 2019 at Villa Assumpta in Baltimore, Maryland. She was a vowed member of the School Sisters of Notre Dame for 71 years. Sister Mary taught in Maryland for a half century, nearly four of those decades she ministered at the Norte Dame of Maryland University as Dean of Students, professor of Communications, and professor and chair of the English department. At her retirement, she was named Professor Emeritus of English.

Mary Catherine Walsh began what she called her “earthly career” on the feast of the Assumption, Aug. 15, 1926. Mary Catherine, born in North Bergen, N.J., was the first of four children of Joseph and Emma Collins Walsh. The family moved to Connecticut, and Mary began first grade at the Bedford Park public school. Prepared by the pastor of her parish, Mary received her first Holy Communion in the spring of 1933. The next year, the Walsh family moved to Leonia, N.J. She received the sacrament of Confirmation from Bishop Thomas J. Walsh in June 1940.

Mary attended Holy Angels Academy in Fort Lee, N.J. Meeting the School Sisters of Notre Dame was Mary’s first contact with any teaching religious order. As a junior, Mary’s “decision regarding her vocation gradually formed itself.” She graduated from Holy Angels in June, 1944. Following her parents’ wishes, she continued her education at the College of Notre Dame of Maryland (now Notre Dame of Maryland University). Mary recorded in her autobiography that this “continued contact with the order only strengthened my vocation.” On Aug. 28, 1945, Mary received the bonnet at Holy Angels chapel.

As a candidate, Mary continued to attend Notre Dame, taking an accelerated course, and obtained her Bachelor of Arts degree with a major in English and minor in French on

June 3, 1947. Mary's reception into the novitiate occurred on July 16, 1947, and she was given the name, Marie Michelle. Sister Marie Michelle professed her first vows on Aug. 3, 1948.

Sister Marie Michelle's first assignment as a professed sister was teaching high school classes at St. John's Literary Institute in Frederick, Md. (1948-56). She again taught secondary classes at St. Mary's High School, Annapolis, Md. (1956-65). Sister Marie Michelle had her first job at the College of Notre Dame of Maryland as the Dean of Students and teacher of English (1965-71). For the next four years, she was a student at Catholic University, Washington, D.C., pursuing a doctorate in English and Linguistics (1971-74). On her return to Notre Dame of Maryland, Sister Marie Michelle was a professor of English and Communications and chairperson of the English department (1977-2013). At her retirement, she was named Professor Emeritus of English.

Sister Marie Michelle was active in many phases of governance in the Baltimore Province of the School Sisters of Notre Dame. She was a member of the Provincial Chapter, the Chapter Planning Committee, Provincial Election Committee and the Provincial Directory Committee. Sister was a writer and editor for Provincial and General Chapter newsletters and authored articles and served as editor for such province publications as *Intercom*, *Soundings* and *The Bond*.

In addition to her Bachelor of Arts and Doctor of Philosophy degrees, Sister Marie Michelle also obtained a Master of Arts degree in English (1959) from the Catholic University of America, Washington, D.C.

A woman of tremendous intellect and brilliant mind, Sister was conscientious about her ministry and was known as a topnotch teacher. She took school seriously and inspired her students to do well. She reached out, challenged and nurtured them. She treated her students as women and had a wonderful rapport with them. Sister Marie Michelle leaves a great legacy as a teacher and scholar.

A Christian Wake Service honoring Sister Marie Michelle was held on Wed. May 22, and the Liturgy of Christian Burial was celebrated by Rev. Paul Zaborowski, OFM Cap. on Thurs., May 23. Both services were held in the chapel of Villa Assumpta. Interment followed in the Notre Dame of Maryland University cemetery. Sister Marie Michelle's survivors include her brother, Joseph Walsh of Optos, CA, and a brother-in-law, Paul Mattingly of Raleigh, NC.

Memorial contributions may be made to the School Sisters of Notre Dame, Atlantic
Midwest Province, c/o Development Office, 345 Belden Hill Road, Wilton, Conn. 06897
or online: www.amssnd.org