



Sister Julia Mary Van Rossem, SSND
September 14, 1934 – August 10, 2019



Wilton, Connecticut - Sister Julia Mary Van Rossem, SSND, slipped away into eternity unexpectedly at Lourdes Health Care Center on August 10, 2019. She was a vowed member of the School Sisters of Notre Dame for 61 years.

Julia Mary Van Rossem was born on September 14, 1934. She was baptized Margaret, the third daughter and last of seven children of Henry Nicholas Van Rossem from the Bronx, and Mary Catherine Keogan, from Greenpoint, New York. The four boys and three girls were baptized at St.

Clement Church, and attended the school, taught by Dominican Sisters.

Bishop Kearney confirmed Margaret at St. Clement's in 1947; she graduated from the eighth grade in June 1948 and went to John Adams High School where she met "edifying companions and kind friends" that she later felt nourished the seed of her vocation. After graduation from high school, this continued for the next four years as she was employed at an insurance company and a bank in Manhattan as stenographer and secretary. Margaret visited the sisters at St. Anthony convent from time to time. Once, when she said she and a friend were thinking of taking cooking lessons, a Sister replied, "Good, you'll need that when you enter the convent."

"That opened conversations and soon I was planning to enter SSND," Sister said in her autobiography. "My mother, now 62, was pleased that I would be settled in life," she wrote. Six days before her 22nd birthday, she became a candidate on September 8, 1956, and traveled to Villa Assumpta in Baltimore. This class was the second to enter at the new Baltimore Motherhouse on North Charles Street. The class remained together for novitiate at Villa Assumpta, for first profession on July 26, 1958.

Sister Julia Mary spent the first 12 years of her professed life at St. Teresa School in Trumbull, Connecticut, teaching grades five, six, and eight. A classmate who was missioned there with her remembers that she was "a good woman; so comfortable to live

with; you could count on her and her word, and her kids were well taught and knew how to behave. We watched each other's classrooms and helped each other on yard duty, and cooked together.”

Julia Mary earned her B.A. at the College of Notre Dame in Baltimore and later earned a master's in Administration and Supervision from Fairfield University. In 1970, Julia Mary ministered as principal at St. Mary School, East Islip, Long Island. In 1976, Julia Mary served as principal at St. Anthony School, in South Ozone Park. In 2002, she moved to St. Rita's Convent in Brooklyn and in 2003, she went to Villa Notre Dame where she immediately entered into community life and made herself useful.

Julia Mary ministered as local leader at Lourdes Health Care Center in 2003 and served four years in this position, and then another two years as a volunteer from 2007 to 2009.

Sister John Vianney Zullo presided over the vigil service at VND on August 13. Nephews and nieces were present, and two spoke of their aunt fondly. The Liturgy of Christian Burial on the following morning was presided over by Father Tom Elliott, VND Chaplain. Burial followed at St. Mary Cemetery, Bethel, Connecticut.

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