

2016 Jubilee



First Profession
August 3, 1956

Mary Francine Rathouz, SSND

60 Years

Sister Mary Francine taught elementary and junior high school following her first profession of vows in 1956. She then served as an elementary school administrator for nine years at Our Lady Queen of Peace in House Springs, Missouri, while continuing to teach. She was also an administrator and teacher at St. Bridget in Pacific, Missouri, for eight years. After continuing to teach junior high school for seven years, Sister Mary Francine became an associate administrator at Villa Gesu Retirement Home in St. Louis for five years. She then served as a School Sisters of Notre Dame local leader and community coordinator at Veronica House in Bridgeton, Missouri. More recently, Sister Mary Francine served as a volunteer at the Chancery in Jefferson City before returning to Theresa Center in St. Louis. She currently ministers as a volunteer in the computer labs at Theresa Center and at the Sarah Community. She earned a bachelor's in English from the former Notre Dame College and a master's in elementary administration

Experience I would like to share...

After experiencing the joys and challenges of teaching and serving as a principal for 37 years, I was asked to minister at Villa Gesu as one of the assistants to the local leader. Those were some of the most rewarding years in pastoral care. There were daily visits to the sisters, both at the Villa and in the hospital, many trips to the emergency room, and in general, time spent with the sisters during their final years and moments on their journeys home. I felt especially privileged to be present when a sister took her last breath and began her new eternal life. It was also during that time that the decision was made to close the Villa. Much time was spent preparing the sisters for this move to public nursing homes. The first sisters were asked if they would be willing to be pioneers in this venture. We moved a small group to two nursing homes, but fortunately, it was not long afterward that we were able to become one of the founding orders to establish the Sarah Community. There, we were able to have all the sisters at one location in community again. I was blessed to be able to continue my ministry with the sister at Veronica House where I served as one of the SSND community coordinators. I am thankful for all my ministries. They indeed helped me become the person I am today.