



School Sisters of Notre Dame
Central Pacific Province

Transforming the world through education

2017 Jubilee

Celebrating 75 years
First Profession—7/31/1942

Sister M. Antonice Backes, SSND

Sister M. Antonice was born in 1917 in Loose Creek, Missouri, and made her first profession in 1942 in St. Louis. She began teaching in St. Louis and Jefferson City, Missouri, through 1951. She then spent 14 years at St. Mary Catholic grade school in Fort Madison, Iowa, followed by several more teaching and administrator assignments in the Davenport Diocese. She was called back to the St. Louis area, devoting herself to students in the Dioceses of St. Louis and Belleville. The longest of these assignments was during the decade of the 1980s, spent at Immaculate Heart of Mary grade school in St. Louis. Beginning in 1993, Sister Antonice served as a volunteer at Our Lady of Sorrows School in St. Louis, through 1998. She continued in volunteer ministries at Notre Dame Preschool and at the St. Augustine Wellston Center throughout the first decade of new millennium. She continues to reside in prayer and presence at Veronica House in St. Louis. She holds a bachelor's in education from Webster College in St. Louis, and in 1973, she earned a master's in elementary education from St. Louis University.



A memory I have to share...

I had worked hard to get the classroom ready for Monday when classes would begin. It was Friday, and I had everything ready. Bulletin boards were up. Books were on each desk when I was called to come back to the convent. Sister Alona met me to inform me I was being transferred to Koeltztown to teach grades one through four. Be at Ripa for dinner. Leave on the 8 a.m. train in the morning. My heart raced. How could I do this with no preparation for primary grades? There was no time to pack my trunk. Sister had asked the pastor to take me to the motherhouse. She also kept saying, "Trust, Sister!" I tried. We left Ripa early the next morning, and I boarded the train. Many thoughts went through my mind during that ride! But trust and obedience were also there. Sister Raphael Merkel greeted me so warmly and calmed my fears. "I've taught primary grades," she said, "and I will help you day by day until you feel at ease." There it was again: trust. I dare say that the seven years I spent at Koeltztown were ones I really appreciated. This experience opened the way to go wherever and whenever I was called, and to go knowing the faithfulness of our God.

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