

In Loving Memory

Sister Carol Ann Collins



Birth
June 13, 1929

Baptism
July 7, 1929

Profession
July 29, 1950

Death
October 17, 2019

Burial
Sancta Maria in Ripa
Cemetery, St. Louis, MO

*Precious and blessed is
the death of the faithful
before God... for
they die in union with
their dear Jesus, in the
grace of God, in peace.*

Blessed Theresa of Jesus Gerhardinger
Foundress of the School Sisters of Notre Dame
Letter 11, September 10, 1831

Sister Carol Ann Collins passed away peacefully in the Infirmary at Sancta Maria in Ripa on October 17, 2019. The older of two girls, she was born on June 13, 1929 to Edna (McMenamy) and Marvin Collins at the former St. Ann's Hospital in St. Louis, Missouri. Her parents named her June Rose. She was baptized on July 7, 1929 at Holy Family Church, St. Louis. Five years later, her younger sister Carol Ann was born.

The family moved frequently during her childhood. June attended Mark Twain Grade School for two years and then attended St. Engelbert Grade School staffed by the School Sisters of Notre Dame. Upon graduation from Rosati-Kain High School, June entered the candidature at Sancta Maria in Ripa on August 27, 1947. As a second year candidate, she taught second grade at St. Bernadette School in Jefferson Barracks. She was received into the novitiate on July 28, 1949 and given the name of her younger sister, Carol Ann. Profession of first vows was on July 29, 1950 and final vows on July 29, 1956.

Sister Carol Ann had received a bachelor's degree in English from the former Notre Dame College in 1957 and a master's degree in English from John Carroll University in Cleveland, Ohio in 1962. Sister Carol Ann taught primary students at St. Mary of Victories, St. Louis; St. Paul, Highland, Illinois; St. Michael, Shrewsbury, Missouri. For two and a half years, she taught at Mater Dei High School, Breese, Illinois.

Earlier in 1960, Sister Carol Ann was asked to begin graduate studies in French. She took courses at the former Notre Dame College, St. Louis, to give her an equivalent of a bachelor's degree in French. Having received a Title IV National Defense Educational grant, she registered at Vanderbilt University, Nashville, TN. Due to a misunderstanding or miscommunication, she was ordered by the bishop to leave the diocese. She then was sent to Catholic University in Washington, DC to pursue the doctoral degree. A professor in the French department did not want her in the department, so she transferred to the University of Illinois at Urbana where she received her Ph.D. in French in 1967. She taught French at the former Notre Dame College for four years. She was appointed Acting President, an interim position, for two years and then became Academic Dean until the college closed in 1977.

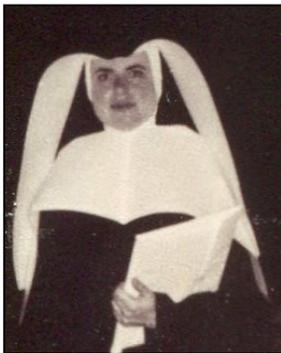
With the closure of Notre Dame College, Sister Carol Ann was asked to pursue training in human communications. She became a facilitator for local communities, school faculties and parish councils. When Sister Mary Margaret Johanning was elected General Superior, Sister Carol Ann completed her term as a provincial councilor. She served on the International Revision Committee for the revision of the Rule and Constitution as directed by Vatican Council II. She spent one year in the Department of Shared Responsibility in the Archdiocese of Newark, New Jersey. She was coordinator of the Pastoral Plan for the Springfield, Illinois diocese for five years. Sister Carol Ann was elected to the St. Louis provincial council in 1991 and served two terms.

continued

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After preparation as a spiritual director, she combined individual spiritual direction and retreat work for 12 years. She was an adjunct retreat staff member at King's House, Belleville, Illinois and later a resident staff member at Queen of Angels Retreat House, Saginaw, Michigan. As her physical energies decreased, she transitioned into retirement. During this time, she volunteered as a week-end staff member at the Alzheimer's Office in St. Louis for several years and tutored a mentally challenged adult.

She also began writing a personal reflection on some of the mental, emotional and spiritual changes that have transpired in her own geriatric journey. In late May 2019, this work was published under the title of *When Threads Wear Thin*. Earlier in May 2019, she was diagnosed with cancer of the tonsils and neck. In June, she celebrated her 90th birthday. After a series of radiation treatments, she chose to be placed on hospice in early July 2019. She died peacefully on October 17, 2019 as sisters prayed with her. Sister Carol Ann is a participant in the Rush Religious Orders Study.

A wake service was held at Theresa Center on October 25, 2019. The Mass of Christian Burial was celebrated the following morning with Rev. Clyde Grogan presiding. Sister Marilyn Wussler, SSND, gave a reflection on the Gospel reading that Sister Carol Ann had chosen. Burial was in the Sancta Maria in Ripa cemetery. Her three nieces: Deborah Humiston, Diane Amsler and Barbara Stogsdill with their families, classmates, friends, former students, colleagues, SSNDs attended the funeral services. She was preceded in death by her parents and her sister, Carol Ann Wilson, who died in December 2018.

Sister Carol Ann was remembered for her deep love of her family and their great appreciation of her. Former first grade students from St. Michael, Shrewsbury and former French students recalled the influence that she had upon them. Members of the various groups that she facilitated or participated in saw her as a wisdom figure in their lives. She was a person who exemplified that one is never too old to embark on a new venture or to learn something new. As a retreat and spiritual director, she journeyed with many to a deeper love and trust in God. She was faithful to the 12-Step Program and the retreat that she prepared on the 12-Step Program has been a great aid to many. The care of creation was important to her and the choices that she made. Recalling her peace, gentleness, joy and thanksgiving, she will be greatly missed by so many who loved her and cherished her presence with them. May she now rejoice with her God whom she loved and served so faithfully during her almost 70 years of religious profession.

By Sister Carol Marie Wildt, SSND