



In Loving Memory

Sister Mary Frederick Keller

The fifth of six children was born to Caroline (Bruch) and Fred Keller on September 19, 1917, in Belleville, Illinois. She was baptized at St. Peter Cathedral, Belleville, on September 30, 1917, and named Mathilda Louise. She grew up with her two sisters and one brother as two of her brothers died in their early childhood years. One of her sisters was our deceased Sister M. Aurelia.

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Mathilda attended St. Peter Cathedral Grade School and the Academy of Notre Dame in Belleville. She was inspired by her older sister to enter School Sisters of Notre Dame (SSND). She entered the candidature at Sancta Maria in Ripa, St. Louis, on August 28, 1935. After two years of college courses, she was missioned to teach 54 fourth grade girls at St. Francis de Sales, St. Louis, during her third year of candidature. She was received into the novitiate on August 2, 1938, and given the name, Mary Frederick after her father. She professed first vows on August 3, 1939, and final vows on August 3, 1945.

At this time, the St. Louis Province was in need of science teachers. Therefore, following profession of first vows, Sister Mary Frederick was sent to St. Louis University to complete her studies for a bachelor degree in chemistry and math. For the next thirty years, she taught science and math at Rosati-Kain High School, St. Louis; Academy of Notre Dame, Belleville; St. Peter High School, St. Charles, Missouri; Notre Dame High School, Quincy, Illinois; St. Mary High School, Cape Girardeau, Missouri and Notre Dame High School, St. Louis.

In 1971, she requested a change of ministry. She was missioned to Villa Gesu, St. Louis, as the director of housekeeping and maintenance. During her three years there, Sister Mary Frederick learned to drive. She then spent a year of community service at the former St. Louis motherhouse. She took several extension courses in bookkeeping and then served in the finance office at the former Notre Dame College, St. Louis, Missouri. When it closed in 1977, she became the director of finances at Notre Dame High School, St. Louis. In 1983, she returned to Notre Dame High School, Quincy, Illinois as the administrative assistant and also taught part-time.

In 1995, Sister Mary Frederick returned to St. Louis and worked in the Notre Dame Tutorial Center at Sancta Maria in Ripa. She reorganized and maintained the textbook library, teaching aids and supplies. She also ministered as the coordinator of senior services for the former St. Louis Province. She was a member of the planning and implementation committee for the 2000-2003 renovation of the former St. Louis motherhouse.

In 2006, she retired to Veronica House, Bridgeton, Missouri. In 2017, she celebrated her 100th birthday. She was placed on hospice in early April 2021. At the

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Birth
September 19, 1917

Baptism
September 30, 1917

Profession
August 3, 1939

Death
April 12, 2021

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

*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

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age of 103, she passed away peacefully in the early evening of April 12, 2021, at Veronica House as sisters and her niece prayed with her.

On April 16, 2021, a sharing of memories was held at Theresa Center prior to the Mass of Resurrection with Rev. Ralph Parthie, OFM presiding. Her niece, Carol Keller, friends and community members at Sancta Maria in Ripa were in attendance. She was buried in the Sancta Maria in Ripa cemetery.

She was preceded in death by her parents, Caroline and Fred Keller, her sisters: Frieda Keller, Sister M. Aurelia Keller, SSND; her brothers: John, Joseph and Frederick (Dorothy) Keller. She is survived by her niece, Carol Keller, nephews Donald and John Keller, friends and sisters in community.

Sister Mary Frederick was a quiet, private and generous person. Her calm and prayerful presence was a gift to all who knew her. She had a keen intellect and was an excellent science and math teacher. She was an invaluable member on committees as she systematically thought through any issue that surfaced. She was a great fan of the St. Louis Cardinals baseball team. She enjoyed working crossword puzzles and playing cards. At the time of her death, she was the second oldest SSND in the Central Pacific province. May she now rejoice in celebrating her new life with her God and family members who have preceded her into eternity!

By Sister Carol Marie Wildt, SSND

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Central Pacific Province

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