



*When all leaves us . . .*

**GOD ALWAYS  
and EVERYWHERE**  
with us,  
*Emmanuel!*



School Sisters of Notre Dame  
of St. Louis

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Saint Louis, MO 63125

[www.ssnd-sl.org](http://www.ssnd-sl.org)



*Sister M. Florentia Koelsch, SSND*

*Born*

*April 29, 1920*

*Professed*

*August 2, 1940*

*Ministry*

*elementary/secondary educator; tutor;*

*volunteer; community service ~*

*Illinois, Iowa, Louisiana, Missouri*

*Died*

*February 5, 2009*

## *Sister M. Florentia Koelsch, SSND*



During the induction into the 2003 Hall of Fame at Redemptorist High School Alumni Association, Baton Rouge, La., "The 82-year old legendary Sister Florentia was hailed as a disciplinarian, a model educator, spiritual counselor and beloved friend of



Redemptorist High School graduates. As a former faculty member, she taught for 14 years ... when the classrooms were converted military barracks. Under her tutelage, numerous students achieved recognition at regional and state science fairs." She reorganized the alumni association and was involved in many extracurricular activities.

The sixth of nine children was born to Elizabeth [Braun] and Frank Koelsch on April 29, 1920, in Effingham, Ill. The next day, she was baptized in St. Anthony of Padua Church and named Anna Marie. Sorrow touched this family of five girls and four boys when two older sisters and one older brother died in their youth within three weeks of each other from whooping cough.



Several years after her birth, the family moved to a farm in Teutopolis, Ill. She received her grade school education at Maple Grove School, a small country district school. Anna Marie attended Teutopolis Township High School. Although this was also a public school, the School Sisters of Notre Dame were her teachers in addition to lay faculty members. The thought of becoming a sister was frequently with her but she struggled to respond to God's call. Anna Marie's parents were devout Catholics and their encouragement supported her in her decision to enter SSND, even when her father seriously hurt his foot several weeks before her entrance.

Anna Marie entered at Ripa on September 2, 1936. She completed her junior college courses and then taught fifth grade at Our Lady of Sorrows for a semester. During the second semester of her third year of candidature, she attended classes at St. Louis University. She was received into the novitiate on August 1, 1939, and given the name Mary Florentia. She professed first vows on August 2, 1940, and final vows on August 2, 1946.

For 52 years, she taught chemistry, biology and general science to high school students. "Sister Flo" served at St. Mary High School and Notre Dame High School in Cape Girardeau, Mo.; Academy of Notre Dame, Belleville, Ill.; St. Paul High School, Highland, Ill.; Redemptorist High School, Baton Rouge, La.; Aquinas High School, Fort Madison, Iowa; Rosary High School, St. Louis; St. Anthony High School, Effingham. After nine years of teaching at St. Anthony's, she continued for four years tutoring, serving as alumni director, and visiting the sick and aged.

In 1998, Sister Florentia came to the motherhouse and tutored for two years at Notre Dame Tutorial Center. She retired at Veronica House in 2000 and was transferred to Anna House in 2005. On February 5, 2009, she was admitted to DePaul Health Center, Bridgeton, Mo., suffering from pneumonia. She died peacefully that evening around 7:18 p.m. with sisters praying with her.

A wake/vigil was held at Anna House and the motherhouse on February 8. The following morning the Mass of Christian Burial was celebrated by Msgr. Leo Enlow from Effingham and Rev. Charles Deister. Her sisters, Teresa Worman of Dieterich, Ill., and Antonette Feldhake of Effingham; her niece, Sister Claret Feldhake; nieces/nephews and their families; friends, and SSNDs were present for the funeral services. Burial was in the motherhouse cemetery.

Her teenage students and their families knew she cared for them. She was an excellent educator and mentor for many. May God richly reward her for her many years of ministry in education!

*Precious and blessed is the death of the faithful before God.*