

Sister Claude Maria Vitale, C.S.J.

Sister Claude Maria Vitale, C.S.J., a member of the Congregation of the Sisters of St. Joseph, Brentwood, for 60 years, died July 28, 2010.

Formerly Sister Frances Marie, she entered the congregation in 1950 from Nativity of Our Blessed Lord parish, Bedford-Stuyvesant.

In 1962, she earned a bachelor's degree in history from St. Francis College, Brooklyn Heights, and obtained a master's in education from Hunter College in 1968. Her post-graduate work and certification were in the fields of learning disabilities and psychology at Yeshiva University, Manhattan.

Before becoming a supervisor in the Learning Disabilities Department in St. Francis School for the Deaf in Brooklyn, she taught in:

- The Brooklyn Diocese on the elementary level in St. Martin of Tours, Bushwick, 1952-53
- **St. Francis Xavier, Park Slope, 1953-55**
- St. Athanasius, Bensonhurst, 1955-60
- St. Augustine, Park Slope, 1960-62
- Our Lady of Mount Carmel, Astoria, 1962-65
- Our Lady of Mount Carmel, Williamsburg, 1965-67

During her 15 years at St. Francis School for the Deaf, she volunteered her summers in Preston County, West Va., working with volunteers and collaborating with many different churches in outreach programs for the community.

In 2000 she was led there to full-time rural ministry, serving on boards/committees whose task was to address the needs of poverty and discrimination in the area. Along with Sister Priscilla, C.S.J., she became a voice for the voiceless in confronting the big business of coal mining and addressing health and safety issues for the miners and their families. She is survived by two sisters, Marie Vitale and Ann Stadelmann.

A funeral in West Virginia preceded the transfer of her body to Maria Regina Chapel, Brentwood, where a Mass of Christian Burial was held Aug. 2.



Above/below: Sister Claude Maria Vitale at St. Francis Xavier School, 1954

