



## *Sisters of St. Francis of Mary Immaculate*

In the evening hours of the second Sunday after Easter, Sister Marie Schramko waited until her room was empty of visitors so she could leave this world the way she lived, peace-filled and quietly, and slip into the arms of her beloved.

Born on February 10, 1917, to Julia and Frank Schramko, she grew up in a mining town - Johnstown, Pennsylvania, with her brothers, Frank and Thomas, and sisters, Julia and Caroline. It was in the fourth grade at St. Stephen, the parish grade school, where she first met the Joliet Franciscans. The seeds of her vocation were planted since she loved the sisters because they were so kind, and immediately thought that she wanted to be like them. Graduating from Johnstown Central Catholic High School at the age of 17, Marie soon fulfilled her dream and made the long journey to Joliet to enter the Sisters of St. Francis of Mary Immaculate on September 8, 1934.

Entering the novitiate on August 12, 1935, she received the name Sister Conradine. Two years later, August 12, 1937, she professed her first vows. In her request to make final vows, she "promised to do anything the community asked of me" and sealed that promise with her final vows on August 12, 1940.

Sister Marie received her undergraduate degree in science from the College of St. Francis (now University of St. Francis) when the institution was only 18 years old. Seeing something special in her, she was held at CSF for a year until she completed her degree, most unusual at that time. She continued her studies receiving a master's degree from DePaul University in science and studied at the University of Illinois on a science grant. Her ministry of Catholic education spanned 77 years, teaching religion, science and mathematics in Ohio, Chicago, and St. Francis Academy (now Joliet Catholic Academy) in Joliet.

In 1961, at the request of Archbishop Carroll, she found herself beginning a 54 year ministry in Fort Lauderdale, Florida. Arriving in Fort Lauderdale, she was to be the founding principal of a new co-ed high school, and she found out that "There was nothing there. The campus was nothing but barren sand and skeletons of brick and mortar. We had to borrow tables and chairs." Undaunted by the situation in which she was placed, she did what was hers to do, and so classes began in September. Cardinal Gibbons High School was literally built around them as they taught. One construction worker quipped how he brushed up on his algebra as he worked.

Continually reinventing herself as teacher, when courses were added and no teachers were available, she would return to school and take the needed courses so that she could teach the following semester. In the midst of all this building, teaching, studying and serving as assistant principal, she completed another Master's Degree in Administration and Counseling at Florida Atlantic University in Boca Raton, Florida, which certified her and allowed the school to be accredited by the State of Florida.

Her former students are legion and her greatest joy was to see them

# *Alleluia!*



## *Sister Marie Schramko, CSF*

around Fort Lauderdale serving the people as judges, doctors, lawyers and politicians.

Her energy and enthusiasm were legendary. She was scheduling classes for 1200 students in her 90's and was acknowledged as the living historian of Cardinal Gibbons. Keeping journals and files for the 54 years she served at Cardinal Gibbons she could readily provide any historical information at a moment's notice.

Paul Ott, her former student, then colleague and now retiring principal of CGHS, had this to say about her. "Sister Marie was not only the founding principal of our school, but she was also the corner stone of almost everything that has been accomplished here over the past 59 years. Our collective debt of gratitude is immeasurable, as is our sense of loss."

At the age of 94, the Catholic Educators Guild of the Archdiocese of Miami bestowed its prestigious Lumen Christi Award on her for her outstanding work as a Catholic educator. In presenting the award, Archbishop Wenski said "her presence in the Lord's vineyard at Gibbons has been and is still a grace."

Retiring at the age of 98, still serving as assistant principal, she said that "I've been so busy, I never noticed" age creeping up.

Sister Marie truly lived the words that she wrote in her request for final vows in 1940 when she "promised to do anything that the community asked of me." When asked by the Congregation to retire from active ministry at the age of 98, with her head held high, she graciously said good-bye to her beloved school and with her companion in ministry and in life, Sister Janet Rieden, joined her sisters at Our Lady of Angels. Here, in her own quiet, kind and peaceful way, she made a difference in the lives of all who knew her. She could be seen at the *Engaging Experiences* classes creating a unique piece of abstract art, petting one of the animals, sitting in the front row listening to a speaker, and always with a warm smile on her face and that little twinkle in her eye.

Marie, you had the words of St. Francis framed in your office. "I have done what was mine to do." Indeed you did and now you really know how the effect of your presence influenced generations of students, faculty, administrators, and...your sisters. May you now be with all who have gone before you and may you be enjoying the fullness of life with your beloved.

## *Sister Marie Schramko, OSF*

*February 10, 1917—April 28, 2019*

<i>Born:</i>	February 10, 1917
<i>Parents:</i>	Frank A. Schramko and Julia (Mihaley) Schramko
<i>Postulancy:</i>	September 8, 1934
<i>Novitiate:</i>	August 12, 1935
<i>First Profession:</i>	August 12, 1937
<i>Final Profession:</i>	August 12, 1940
<i>Entered New Life:</i>	April 28, 2019

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### **Ministry History**

1937-1938	Student: College of St. Francis, Joliet, Illinois
1938-1946	Teacher: Ancient History, Latin, Algebra, Religion, Sodality, Biology, Geometry, Band, St. Mary, Columbus Ohio
1946-1950	Teacher: Latin, Biology, Algebra, Religion, General Science, Health, St. Francis de Sales, Chicago, Illinois
1950-1952	Teacher: Latin, Biology, Sodality, St. Francis Academy, Joliet, Illinois
1952-1957	Teacher: Religion, Algebra, English, Biology, Physiology, Marybrook Academy, Maumee, Ohio
1957-1961	Teacher: Religion, Algebra, Geometry, Biology, General Science, Health, St. Procopius, Chicago, Illinois
1961-1973	Superintendent/Principal/Teacher: Religion, Biology, Algebra, Geometry, Physical Education, Latin, Guidance Counseling, Cardinal Gibbons High School, Fort Lauderdale, Florida
1973-1976	Administration: Cardinal Gibbons High School, Fort Lauderdale
1976-2016	Assistant Principal: Cardinal Gibbons High School, Fort Lauderdale
2016-2017	Mission Advancement Volunteer: Joliet Franciscan Center, Joliet, Illinois
2017-2019	Community Service, Our Lady of Angels Retirement Home, Joliet, Illinois

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<i>Wake:</i>	Monday, May 13, 2019, 2:00-6:45 p.m., Our Lady of Angels, Joliet
<i>Prayer Service:</i>	Monday, May 13, 2019, 4:45 p.m., Our Lady of Angels, Joliet
<i>Mass of Christian Burial:</i>	Monday, May 13, 2019, 7:00 p.m., Our Lady of Angels, Joliet
<i>Burial:</i>	Tuesday, May 14, 2019, leaving Our Lady of Angels at 9:00 a.m. to Resurrection Cemetery, Romeoville, Illinois
<i>Interment:</i>	Section 8, Lot 345, Grave 4, Resurrection Cemetery
<i>Predeceased by:</i>	By her parents, Frank A. Schramko and Julia (Mihaley) Schramko; brothers, Frank and Thomas Schramko; sisters, Julia Smith and Carolyn Grant
<i>Survived by:</i>	Nephew, Frank Schramko; and nieces, Delores Lewandowski, Dr. Judi Demster and Gwen Kerwin

*Rest in Peace, Sister Marie!*