

SISTER M. ILDEFONSE GOSS
November 9, 1937 — April 27, 2006

Fifty years ago, Miss Joan Goss was missioned to teach 5th and 6th graders at Holy Rosary School in Juniata. April 7, 2006, Sister Ildefonse Goss taught her last class after 49 years of teaching.

Joan was the daughter of Robert and Mary Grace Little Goss. She was the proud sister of Barb, Judy and Patty and brother Tom. I hope you don't mind the familiarity, but that is how we always talk of you. Barb, Judy and Patty and my how excited we all were when Tommy was born. If we had had buttons on our habits I'm sure Sister would have popped a few. Needless to say, we lost count of the nieces and nephews whom she loved very much. To name all of you would take as long as naming all her accomplishments.

Sister received her bachelors in Math from Seton Hill University, and a Masters in Education with emphasis on Theology from Xavier University in Ohio.

With this education, Sister went on to educate thousands of young people and adults. She taught in Pittsburgh, Arizona, Bethesda, Maryland, and two years at Elizabeth Seton High School which continued to 27 more years at Seton-LaSalle High School. She taught for 13 years at Saint Anselm in Swissvale.

Memories of her are very fond and loving. The kindergarten teacher at the grade school said that Sister was the first teacher who made math understandable. Another— she made me love religion. People called to tell me after Father announced at Sunday masses.

But her real love was teaching God's Word, whether young people or adults. She was invited many times to give days and evenings of recollection. The occasions were often on Scripture which she was able to make come alive.

Her greatest love was the Eucharist. She could be very passionate about the Lord in the Eucharist and in Eucharist Adoration.

We could sit here all night and list various accomplishments. However, one of Sister Ildefonse's former students said something that I believe is, in the long run, a truly important tribute. Maggie said that she shared with Sister Ildefonse at one of our reunions that Sister was the person who had the most influence on her life. Sister taught her math and religion but she will always be most grateful for the love and understanding of the Mass. What is really wonderful about this tribute, Sister heard it.

While praying and asking for guidance in preparing these few thoughts, these words from Scripture were in front of me:

*So shall my word be that goes out from my mouth;
It shall not return to me empty,
But it shall accomplish that which I purpose,
And succeed in the thing for which I sent it.*

Isaiah 55:11

Sister allowed herself to be an instrument in spreading the Word. Thank you Ildy, now you can pray for the rest of us, especially your group.

*Funeral Liturgy Reflection
Sister Mary Victor Powers
May 1, 2006*