

Death Notice

SISTER MARY FRANCES ND 5265

(formerly Sister Mary Donald Ann)

Mary Frances DUNHAM

Christ the King Province, Chardon, Ohio, USA



Date and Place of Birth:	May 9, 1929	Columbus, Ohio
Date and Place of Profession:	August 16, 1959	Cleveland, Ohio
Date and Place of Death:	July 28, 2016	Health Care Center, Chardon, Ohio
Date and Place of Funeral:	August 4, 2016	Provincial Center, Chardon, Ohio
Date and Place of Burial:	August 4, 2016	Resurrection Cemetery, Chardon, Ohio

Mary Frances was the first of six children born to Homer and Margaret (Wurm) Dunham, three boys and three girls. Like other families in the difficult depression-lean years, finding housing was a challenge; the family moved a number of times before settling in Mentor, Ohio. After graduating from high school, Mary Frances obtained a scholarship to Notre Dame College and earned a bachelor's degree in Health and Physical Education. Her first teaching position was at Sacred Heart Academy, Cincinnati, Ohio. It was here that she realized her calling to religious life and was admitted to the Society of the Sacred Heart. Because of persistent health issues, she left that community but was still very aware of her call to be a religious. "I have been trained to teach and I love to teach, so I have asked permission to join the Sisters of Notre Dame whom I have admired and respected since I was in college." Mary Frances entered on September 8, 1956, from St. Mary Parish, Conneaut, Ohio. At investment she received the name Sister Mary Donald Ann. Later, she returned to her baptismal name, Mary Frances.

Sister Mary Frances continued her studies in Guidance and Counseling and received a master's degree in Administration from John Carroll University, University Heights, Ohio. She ministered as a high school teacher and was the founding principal of Notre Dame Academy in Middleburg, Virginia. Sister served at Notre Dame College as Dean of Academic Affairs and Institutional Planning Director. In her later years, she was the director and then a tutor at the SND Legacy Project, an adult literacy program housed in Cleveland.

"My life experiences have enabled me to teach through administration, counseling, program development, listening to others and just being who God called me to become." Sister Mary Frances was gifted with wisdom and a true spirit of discernment. She served in community leadership and had a heart for others - an acceptance that drew out the potential in her students and fellow sisters. Sister became the community consultant for pre-retirement/retirement, envisioning new ways and opening new doors to sisters approaching this time in their lives. She possessed the ability to see beyond the present to a future that was not perfect, but good and full of hope.

In 2012, Sister moved to the Provincial Center where she continued to share her keen sense of humor and her friendly ways. Her eyes and her smile seemed to embrace each person with kindness and compassion. This past year brought enormous challenges and much suffering, but she never stopped knowing how to love, pray for and be with those she held dear. We are grateful for the presence of Sister Mary Frances and the witness of her wisdom and fidelity. May she know God's abundant life and boundless love!