

SISTER M. DeCHANTAL SAYLOR O.S.F. (Odilia) 647

Born: June 26, 1894
Parents: William and Catharine (Linser) Saylor
Postulancy: December 8, 1910
Novitiate: August 12, 1911
First Profession: August 12, 1913
Final Profession: August 12, 1919
Died: Wednesday, February 1, 1989 at 4:00 a.m. at
Our Lady of Angels Retirement Home



Ministry:

1912 - 1915 St. Mary, Columbus, OH, Grades 1, 2 & 8
1915 - 1923 St. Francis Academy, Joliet, IL, Grades 7, 8, Freshman Classes,
Religion, English, Latin
1923 - 1931 St. Mary, Columbus, OH, Religion, English, Latin, Greek, Physics,
Typewriting, Mathematics, Chemistry, Superior and Principal
1931 - 1934 College of St. Francis, Joliet, IL, Mathematics Department
1934 - 1937 University of Michigan, Ann Arbor, MI, Student, Graduate Work
1937 - 1938 College of St. Francis, Joliet, IL, Writing Dissertation
1938 - 1939 College of St. Francis, IL, Mathematics & Education
1939 - 1942 St. Francis de Sales, Chicago, IL, Religion, English, Latin,
Mathematics
1942 - 1943 St. Clement, Chicago, IL, Religion, English, History, Chemistry
1943 - 1949 St. Peter, Mansfield, OH, Superior and Principal
1949 - 1951 St. Clement, Chicago, IL, Mathematics, Biology, Principal
1951 - 1955 College of St. Francis, Joliet, IL, Education Department
1955 - 1959 St. Mary, Columbus, OH, Columbus Diocesan Consultant
1959 - 1975 St. Peter, Mansfield, OH, Mathematics, Guidance Counselor
1975 - 1980 St. Peter, Mansfield, OH, Retired
1980 - 1989 Our Lady of Angels, Joliet, IL, Retired

Wake: Friday, February 3, 1989 from 2 - 7 p.m. with a prayer service
at 4:15 p.m.

Mass of Christian Burial: Friday, February 3, 1989 at 7 p.m.

Burial: Saturday, February 4, 1989, Resurrection Cemetery.

*For those who have been faithful, O Lord,
life is not ended, but merely changed.*

Two weeks ago, Sister DeChantal Saylor suffered a stroke. On the last day of January our Sisters surrounded her bedside and prayed the prayers for the dying. Quietly on Wednesday morning, February 1, 1989, at 4:00 a.m. she was born to life eternal.

Odelia Saylor was born on June 26, 1894 in Delphos, Ohio to Catharine and William Saylor. She had four brothers, all of whom are deceased. She is survived by her faithful sister-in-law, Lillian Saylor, who lives in Parma, Ohio.

Mansfield Ohio was always "home" for Sister DeChantal. Her family was one of the pioneer families that formed St. Peter's Parish. She attended St. Peter's grade school, and counted among her classmates Bishop Michael Ready, who she was proud to say "carried my books home from school."

In 1910 she entered the postulancy and lived to celebrate her 75 year diamond jubilee in 1986. In 1971 when asked for her opinion about the changing role of religious women in the Church, she firmly stated "fundamentally the role of a religious has not changed. We are consecrated persons and must distinguish ourselves by the conduct of our lives, our devotion to duty, and the spirit of charity inspiring us."

Sr. DeChantal was a pioneer student. In years when it wasn't too popular for women to obtain higher degrees, she spend four years at the University of Michigan where she received her Ph.D. in 1938. She invaded the all male world of engineering classes and received her degree in math and education.

She was an educator. She taught students from first grade through college. She served as principal and as diocesan consultant. We will best remember her when we think of St. Peter's in Mansfield. She was principal there from 1943 - 49 when there were 33 sisters, and over 1000 students in the school. In 1959 she returned to Mansfield and remained there until 1980 when she retired to Our Lady of Angels. In 1971 when she retired from full-time teaching, the people of St. Peter's presented her with a certificate of thanks for "her devotion and selfless dedication to the cause of educating the children of St. Peter's." During the time of her "semi-retirement" she remained busy organizing the new Alumni Association of St. Peter's, and continuing to help in the school.

Sr. DeChantal was a woman of commanding presence. One of the Mansfield pastors liked to call her the "old war horse" and she enjoyed that. She was strict as a teacher, stern as a superior, and when her lower lip jutted out, all knew she meant business and it was time to act. But this stern manner was coupled with an intelligence and humor that allowed her to enjoy being teased, laugh at Peanuts cartoons, and delight in her view of St. Peter's courtyard activity from her bedroom characteristically decorated in her favorite yellow color.

Father Downey, a retired priest from Toledo, when hearing of her death simply said, "she was a great lady." He recalled that when he was a young priest, Sister DeChantal would leave special treats in the confessional for him. Perhaps this story captures the reason why so many people in Mansfield still talk about her, still remember her so fondly.

She once wrote, the peace prayer of St. Francis is my favorite prayer. We thank you dear Sister for your 78 years with us, and we ask Our God to grant you that peace for all eternity. Amen. Alleluia.

