

Sister Mary Vincent Kirk, O.S.F.



Born: November 4, 1914
Parents: William and Marguerite (Clancy) Kirk
Entered from: St. Pascal, Chicago, IL
Postulancy: September 8, 1932
Novitiate: August 12, 1933
Profession: August 12, 1935
Died: Friday, January 8, 1999 at Our Lady of Angels Retirement Home, Joliet, IL at 10:12 a.m.

Ministry:

1935 - 1937 College of St. Francis, Joliet, IL, Student
 1937 - 1944 St. Francis Academy, Joliet, IL, Teacher, Algebra, Plane Geometry, Biology
 1944 - 1981 College of St. Francis, Joliet, IL, Professor, Department of Biology
 1981 - 1985 College of St. Francis, Joliet, IL, Professor Emeritus
 1985 - 1988 College of St. Francis, Joliet, IL, Professor Emeritus, Retired
 1988 - 1999 Our Lady of Angels Retirement Home, Joliet, IL, Retired

Wake: Our Lady of Angels, Joliet, IL, Sunday, January 10, 1999
 2-7 p.m. with prayer service at 4:30 p.m.

Mass of Christian Burial: Our Lady of Angels, Joliet, IL
 Sunday, January 10, 1999 at 7:00 p.m.

Burial: Monday, January 11, 1999 leaving Our Lady of Angels at
 9:00 a.m. to Resurrection Cemetery, Romeoville, IL,
 Sec. 8, Lot 337, Gr. 12

Survived by: her sisters Sister Kathleen Kirk (Joliet, IL), Marguerite Kirk (Chicago, IL)
 and many nieces and nephews

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

Sister Mary Vincent Kirk was born in Chicago, Illinois on November 4, 1914 to William and Marguerite (Clancy) Kirk. On November 22nd of that year, she was baptized Mary Genevieve. She was one of five children, including her brother William, and her sisters Eleanore, Kathleen, and Marguerite. Young Mary attended St. Pascal Grade School and Alvernia High School in Chicago.

Mary and her sister Kathleen both came to Joliet to become Franciscan sisters. Mary received the name of Sister Mary Vincent and Kathleen received the name of Sister Mary Willyne. Her sister Eleanore married and raised a family and her brother Bill was ordained a priest.

Following first profession of vows on August 12, 1935, Sister Mary Vincent completed her studies at the College of St. Francis with a major in Biology. She taught at St. Francis Academy in Joliet. In 1944, Sister Mary Vincent began teaching Biology at the College of St. Francis, and continued in that profession for over forty years. During her time at the College of St. Francis, Sister Mary Vincent was enthusiastic and innovative. She helped to develop the St. Francis College Medical Technology Program and the Health Arts Program.

Sister Mary Vincent believed and lived the concept that "One of the principal and most important functions of a Catholic college has always been to provide, at a crucial stage in the student's development, models of an intelligent and adult faith... so that by their lives, their learning, their lectures, they give testimony to the meaningfulness, intelligibility, and importance of the discipline they teach and the ideals of the college." These were words from an address to the CSF faculty on August 25, 1977.

In 1980, Dr. Orr recognized these gifts in Sister Mary Vincent Kirk when, in conferring the rank of distinguished teaching professor, he named her as "inspiring teacher, outstanding contributor, advisor, researcher, author, civic leader... explorer of the stuff of life and of the universe, distinguished teacher..." She was revered and cherished by her students and her colleagues. She had a lifelong love of learning and of exploration. Later, the College of St. Francis honored her as Professor Emeritus, dedicated a Biology lab in her memory, named a scholarship in her honor, and began a science seminar series in her name.

In 1988, Sister Mary Vincent began her retirement years at Our Lady of Angels Retirement Home. She continued to read, to pray, to inspire and to study the mysteries of the universe. She enjoyed visiting with her family members and her friends and was always most gracious in receiving her visitors. When her health began to fail, she did not complain and was grateful for those who gave her care. On Friday, January 8, 1999, as Sister Mary Vincent's condition grew weaker, Sister Kathleen and many other sisters gathered at her bedside to pray and to sing. Shortly after ten o'clock that morning, Sister Mary Vincent serenely gave her soul back to her creator.

Sister Mary Vincent, we are grateful for the way your life had led others to God. We ask you now, as you are united with God forever, to pray for us your family, friends, students, and your Franciscan sisters. Help us to contemplate the mystery of all of God's creation. May you live in God's peace forever. Amen. Alleluia.

