

SISTER M. AMBROSE DIDIER O.S.F. (Florence)

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Born: October 25, 1916
Parents: Aloysius M. and Emma (Geimer) Didier
Postulancy: September 8, 1934
Novitiate: August 12, 1935
First Profession: August 12, 1937
Final Profession: August 12, 1940
Died: Monday, July 18, 1988 at 5:55 p.m. at
University Hospital, Denver, Colorado



Ministry:

1937 - 1938 St. Francis Convent, Joliet, IL, Student at CSF
1938 - 1943 St. Francis de Sales, Chicago, IL, English, Religion, Science
and German
1943 - 1944 Marybrook Academy, Maumee, OH, Religion, English, Physiology
1944 - 1945 St. Peter, Mansfield, OH, Chemistry, Algebra
1945 - 1952 SS. Peter & Paul, Chicago, IL, Religion, Chemistry, Algebra
1952 - 1957 St. Procop, Cleveland, OH, Algebra Geometry, Biology, Chemistry,
Religion
1957 - 1960 Catholic University of America, Washington, DC, Student:
Education Department
1960 - 1972 College of St. Francis, Joliet, IL, Education Department
1972 - 1974 Annunciation, Aurora IL, Learning Center
1974 - 1975 St. Francis Academy, Joliet, IL, General Work
1975 - 1976 St. Francis Convent, Joliet, IL, Community Service
1976 - 1979 Joliet Catholic High School, Joliet, IL, Library
1979 - 1988 College of St. Francis, Joliet, IL, Library Staff

Wake: Friday, July 22, 1988 from 2 - 7 p.m.
Prayer Service at 4:15 p.m.

Mass of Christian Burial: Friday, July 22, 1988 at 7 p.m.

Burial: Saturday, July 23, 1988 from OLA at 9 a.m. to
Resurrection Cemetery.

Survived by sisters: Sister M. Johanna, Sister M. Peter, Sister Mary Therese,
Mrs. Lorraine Schuetz, Mrs. Marcella Merriman,
Mrs. Barbara Flynn
brothers: Aloysius, Herbert, Arnold, Jerome and Paul

Preceded in death by sister, Pauline Krueger, and brother, James

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

July 22, 1988

Dear Sisters and Associates,

When Florence Ann Didier was born to Emma and Aloysius on October 25, 1916, she was second in a generation of children that would grow to a total of fourteen. When Emma died in 1984, 24 years after her husband, she had 49 grandchildren and 50 great grandchildren. Sister Ambrose was the unifying agent of this large family. We, the Sisters of St. Francis, claim four Didier Sisters: Ambrose, Johanna, Peter and Mary Therese.

Sister Ambrose what do we say or write! Enthusiastic, resilient, adventuresome, persistent, perhaps aggravating on occasion! As Father Linden her pastor described her: "She has a determination that never stops short of achievement."

The "invisible nun", as one of her favorite buttons read, is quite a misnomer. Sister Ambrose, as we recall, was always noticeable and to be heard during the discussions following any gathering. Sister Ambrose pursued her own on-going formation education endeavors. In the upcoming semester she intended to enroll in the Shakespeare course, so as always she was in remote preparation this summer.

Sister Ambrose loved to tell stories: stories of her spiritual dryness at the age of 9, stories of the farm, stories of her childhood, stories of her enormous extended family, that seemed to dwell in every town and city of the United States, not to mention Luxembourg. Currently Sister had been sorting and sharing the family photos in the shape of a small album with carefully selected favorites for each brother and sister.

This love of family extended into Sister Ambrose's ministry of education during these past 50 years. Extracurricular projects distinguished her career, remember her devotion to Religious Education which included families of puppets to delight the children, or the Saints that came to life in such unique ways. Vocation Promotion projects at every level of teaching mirrored Ambrose's love of her life's choice. Personal followup of students, especially those in religious life, was important to Sister Ambrose over the years. In fact, this final journey to Hawaii was to visit Sr. Lucille, a Maryknoller, and former student.

Many, many aspects of Sister Ambrose's life could be shared here. To be selective is very difficult. The College of St. Francis would most likely be Sister Ambrose's top priority. She served there in many capacities under both painful and joyful circumstances. Recently she wrote her first installment of an intended series, entitled: "If the walls could talk." Through the changes in the physical structure of CSF she intended to trace the history and progress of her favorite place. Sister Ambrose enjoyed her present work in the College Library, but also admitted the pain and suffering of watching her colleague, Russell Reagan, diminish and die of cancer this summer. The CSF alum and her work with the PHONOTHON meant



much to Sister Ambrose. Before any journey she equipped herself with names, addresses, phone numbers to contact the area's alum. Dr. Nadine Bruce of the University of Hawaii in Honolulu was scheduled to meet with her this time. In 1986 the Alumni Association of the College of St. Francis publicly recognized Sister Ambrose by bestowing the "Award of Merit for sustained service to the college and the Association."

Sister Ambrose was deeply dedicated to our Brazilian missions. When her health prevented her from going permanently to Brazil, she found ingenious ways to be of service. Sister Johanna and all our Sisters in Brazil will attest to this. Sister Ambrose was a faithful correspondent even until her final day when she prepared letters to be hand delivered by Sister Leomarie next week. Throughout these 25 years the Brazilian Postal Service has co-operated with the arrival of many and various sized packages marked "BOOKS". Now Ambrose's love for our Brazilian endeavors will be experienced in yet another form.

During Novitiate training formerly it was customary to study Tanquerey's SPIRITUAL LIFE. From this book Sister Ambrose developed her own system of "Tanquerizing". To many this may sound strange but she really worked at letting go of whatever material objects that may stand between her and God. Shortly before her flight she assured Sister Peter that she was physically and spiritually ready for her journey. If we are to judge by the condition of her material possessions, this is certainly accurate.

Besides being very supportive of priests and their ministry, Sister Ambrose was often a challenge to them with her great enthusiasm and plans for parish improvement especially in the Religious Education programs. Was it only co-incidence that Father James Donovan of St. Anastasia Parish, Waukegan, IL, happened to be present on Ambrose's last flight to anoint her?

Sister Ambrose loved life, but she faced sickness and death directly. She was no stranger to suffering. Through her own suffering she seemed to have developed a real sensitivity for the suffering of others. Hospitalization, recover time, and a few close calls had give her a chance to step back and look at life and death. Her diabetes reminded her each day of the fragility of the human condition. Daily exercise, her own method of swimming, her daily novena to Our Lady of the Springs (her nap), helped sustain her.

Sister Ambrose had a realistic view of her imperfections, and she would want us to acknowledge that fact. She would want to be able to recognize herself in this Alleluia letter. So we say:

"We miss you, Ambrose, but you were true to the end, doing the unexpected that many of us would not dare!"

We the Sisters of St. Francis extend our thanks to the Didier family for all they have shared with us. We will miss the gift of Sister Ambrose, but we know the Lord wanted her now!

Sincerely,

The Governing Board