



Born to New Life



Sister Doris Lavinthal, MPF

Sister Doris Lavinthal, MPF, died peacefully on Wednesday, October 5, 2022, at St. Joseph Hall, Villa Walsh, Morristown, New Jersey. She was 93.

A native of Trenton, New Jersey, Sister Doris entered the Religious Teachers Filippini in 1950. She received the habit in 1951 and made her religious profession in 1954.

Sister Doris earned a BS degree in Education from the College of St. Elizabeth in Convent Station, New Jersey, and a MS in Counselor Education from Marywood College in Scranton, Pennsylvania.

In her 71 years of religious life, Sister Doris ministered as a classroom teacher, Principal, and Director. She was missioned in the (arch)dioceses of Hartford, Newark, Ogdensburg, and Paterson. Sister Doris faithfully served the Community in several leadership roles: Supervisor of Schools, Provincial Councillor and Community Treasurer for three terms, and local Superior in Watertown, New York, and Pequannock, New Jersey.

Sister Doris's passion for education was demonstrated by her commitment to the students, parents, faculty and staff where she ministered. Her most extensive tenure was at Villa Walsh Academy in Morristown, New Jersey, where she served as Principal from 1976 until 1990, when she was appointed Director. Generations of students were the recipients of her visionary leadership and dedication to Catholic education in accord with the charism of Saint Lucy Filippini. In 2013, the newly-constructed athletic center was dedicated in her honor and named the "Sister Doris Lavinthal Athletic Center."

The Mass of Christian Burial for Sister Doris was held in Saint Lucy Chapel at Villa Walsh on Tuesday, October 11, 2022. Her body was laid to rest in Ave Maria Cemetery at Villa Walsh.

In his homily, the Most Reverend Arthur J. Serratelli, Bishop Emeritus of Paterson, noted, *"At the moment that Sister Doris passed from this world to the next...she spoke no final word. Nor did she need to. By her conversion from Judaism to Catholicism, her whole life became a clear, unmistakable word of faith in Jesus who died for our sins and was raised from the dead, the one Savior of all. Living the evangelical counsels as a religious faithfully for 71 years, her actions spoke that saving word to countless others."*

Sister Patricia Pompa, Provincial Superior, who served as Principal during Sister Doris' tenure as Director at Villa Walsh Academy offered this reflection, *"Sister Doris' greatest joy was when she was in the classroom. Her thoughts on teaching were quite simple, 'Teaching is a constant search for hidden treasure. It is a gentle probing into the future.' She was a gentle giant in so many ways. Her love and service to the Community always came first...Sister Doris was vital in the preparations and construction of Regina Pacis, Freytag Hall, St. Joseph Hall Infirmary and of course the Sister Doris Lavinthal Athletic Center. The naming of the building was kept from her until it was actually on the building...and we all know why. It was her kindness, generosity and goodness that overshadowed what many thought was a serious demeanor. It was only when you got past that external look, that you saw the wise, gentle and compassionate soul emerge. And so we thank you, Sister Doris, for sharing your life with us. It has been a remarkable journey of faith, of trust, and of abundant joy!"*

Sister Ascenza Tizzano, General Superior, in her letter of sympathy to the Province of Saint Lucy wrote, *"We are the recipients of what Sister Doris has quietly, yet impressively accomplished and given to the Province and to Villa Walsh Academy. Her passing leaves an emptiness. ... Isn't it surprising that we have so much to share regarding Sister Doris, yet she was a person who spoke little, but the 'little' was profound and demanded your full attention. ... Undoubtedly, the students and the school were the center of her life. This is where her passionate heart and visionary mind raced; the place where she used her creative mind to introduce innovative programs, ... where she earned the love and respect of teachers, staff, parents, and students. This is where she could do her share in evangelizing and keeping aflame the light of Christ that shone through Saint Lucy."*