



## SISTERS OF ST. FRANCIS

PO BOX 100 OLDENBURG, IN 47036

WWW.OLDENBURGFRAUCISCANS.ORG

FACEBOOK: FRANCISCAN SISTERS OF OLDENBURG



April 13, 2019

Dear Sisters, Associates, Co-Workers, Family, and Friends,

S. MARY STELLA GAMPFER, OSF

With the Resurrection on the distant horizon, our Sister Mary Stella Gampfer journeyed to her God to celebrate the Holy Week festivities in a grand style befitting Stella herself.

Carolyn entered the stage on February 25, 1938 as the second child of Charles and Rose Mary Gampfer. She was already introduced to the Sisters of St. Francis when her older brother Charles enrolled in first grade at St. Bernard School in Winton Place, Cincinnati. As Stella reports in her autobiography, it was Sister Cecilia Holohan in primary grades and Sister Rose Helen in upper grades who continued to “gently prod” in her the spirit of vocation to religious life. With her entrance delayed due to her mother’s cancer surgery, Stella awoke on Thanksgiving, her first full day at Oldenburg, to a snowy wonderland. She considered this a great gift! In later years she came to treasure her Community in a special way at the deaths of her parents and her brother David.

Stella’s early mission experiences took her to high schools in Evansville, Oldenburg, and Middletown. In addition to teaching English, history and religion, Stella served as advisor to prize-winning student newspapers. She discovered as well a special interest in pre-historic and comparative religions.

Stella’s long-term production, however, came with her full-time appointment to Marian College (now University) in 1974. During the next forty years she was to teach writing and literature courses there. Graduates comment on Stella’s excellence in the classroom as well as her skill in eliciting good composition techniques from her students. In addition to her role as instructor, S. Stella moderated the college literary anthology, “Fioretti,” as well as directing the annual Student Recognition Dinner and Awards Program. It was in preparing award certificates for this latter event that Stella displayed her artistic talent of calligraphy.

Within her professional field of English, S. Stella excelled in teaching Shakespeare. One can probably hear her say, along with Romantic poet John Keats, “I have good reason to be content, for thank God I can read and perhaps understand Shakespeare to his depths.” Stella’s delight was to attend Shakespeare productions with her friend and fellow-enthusiast Fr. Leopold Keffler; she also accompanied students to the Shakespeare Festival in England. When in later years Stella asked to reduce her course load, she requested, however, to keep her upper-division Shakespeare classes.

In addition to these art forms, Stella was a lover of other types of beauty as well. One of her favorite sites to visit was the Missouri Botanical Gardens and Arboretum in St. Louis. Her love for creation also extended to the four-legged variety. A meal at any restaurant was incomplete without

Stella's pulling out from her purse a plastic bag which she'd pack with leftover goodies for Abby, the community dog.

We extend our sympathy to Stella's much-loved brothers Terry, Joe and sister-in-law Alice who faithfully kept vigil at Stella's bedside for long hours this past week. We remember too other family members, classmates, and friends. Our appreciation also remains with all of Stella's caregivers in St. Clare Hall.

William Shakespeare penned in his play *Julius Caesar* that "Cowards die many times before their deaths; the valiant never taste of death but once." Tasting death just this once then, S. Stella, valiant woman, may you experience the promise repeated in *Hamlet*:  
"For in that sleep of death what dreams may come!"

Trusting in the promise of Easter peace,



Sister Christa Franzer  
*For the General Council*

SISTER MARY STELLA (Carolyn) GAMPFER, OSF

Birth: February 25, 1938

Entrance into Religious Life: November 21, 1956

Entrance into Eternal Life: April 12, 2019

MISSIONS AT WHICH SISTER STELLA SERVED:

1959-1960	Our Lady of Angels High School, St. Bernard OH
1960-1961	Marian (College) University – Student, Indianapolis IN
1961-1967	Rex Mundi, Evansville, IN
1967-1971	Immaculate Conception Academy (OA), Oldenburg IN
1971-1974	Fenwick High School, Middletown OH
1974-2015	Marian (College) University, Indianapolis IN
2015-2019	Motherhouse, Oldenburg IN

*Funeral arrangements have been entrusted to Weigel Funeral Home – visit their website to view Sister's online memorial, and if desired, an online condolence may be left on the site to share with her family and the Franciscan Sisters – [www.Weigelfh.com](http://www.Weigelfh.com)*

*Memorial Donations in Sister's memory may be given online at [www.OldenburgFranciscans.org](http://www.OldenburgFranciscans.org)*