

## **John Christine Wolkerstorfer, CSJ**

**May 4, 1931 – August 3, 2017**

Described by friends and family as “smart,” “funny,” “opinionated,” “faithful,” and “a great teacher both in and out of the classroom,” John Christine Wolkerstorfer, CSJ, (born Marianne Kathryn) died peacefully, surrounded by members of her community and family, on August 3, 2017 at Carondelet Village in St. Paul, MN. Born May 4, 1931, in St. Paul, she was the youngest of ten children born to Marie Christine (of St. Paul) and John Wolkerstorfer (of Pamhagen, Austria).

She graduated as Valedictorian of her St. Joseph Academy class of 1949, joining the Sisters of St. Joseph shortly after graduation on September 8, 1949.

A short bio submitted in conjunction with her many publications stated, “Sister John Christine Wolkerstorfer, CSJ, is Professor Emerita in American History at the College of St. Catherine. A native of St. Paul, she has MA and PhD Degrees in American History from the University of Minnesota. She carried supporting programs in Political Science at that time. She retired from the St. Catherine’s in 1997 after serving 24 years in the History Department where her courses included various topics in American History, with specialties in 19<sup>th</sup> Century American History, Immigration History, Ethnic Studies, the American Civil War and Reconstruction, and Studies in Nativism in American History. During this time, she also served as political liaison of the college both at the local and national levels. She chaired an Oral History Project at the college for 11 years, the results of which spawned the 1992 history of the college, *More Than a Dream*, which she and Sr. Rosalie Ryan co-authored. Active in the National and State Oral History Societies, Sister has used her work in this area in two more recent local histories she authored; *Pride in Past. Faith in the Future – A History of the Catholic Aid Association of Saint Paul, Minnesota 1878-1996* (1997), and “You Shall Be My People” – *A History of the Archdiocese of Saint Paul and Minneapolis* (1999). Sister has been involved in several innovative programs sponsored by the College of St. Catherine – she was an early faculty member in Weekend College, team taught several honors courses in the program, and was among the first to offer an Early American history course on computer for the Distance Learning Program. Before launching her college teaching career, Sister taught 10 years in the archdiocesan parochial system and 9 years in Catholic secondary education. She also taught briefly at St. Cloud State College and the University of Minnesota. Always an active member of her religious community, Sister continued to

serve on various committees and boards for the St. Paul Province of the Sisters of St. Joseph of Carondelet.”

Additionally, throughout her career, she was a periodic speaker at symposiums and events and wrote and published many articles. She was honored with “gratitude and affection” in 1997 by the College of St. Catherine and named Professor Emerita. She received Excellence in Teaching Awards in 1998 from the St. Catherine Alumnae Association and, in 2008, from the Myser Family Foundation.

In her younger life, she enjoyed swimming and appreciated using the pool at Carondelet Village where she lived in retirement. She maintained friendships with her community and family. In her room, she kept a copy of “Survival. A study guide for Teilhard de Chardin’s The Phenomenon of Man.” She helped provide care for members of her family and community and while at Carondelet Village, she companioned a resident with Alzheimer’s. “She saw it as part of her ministry,” said friend Peggy O’Leary, CSJ. “She went to daily Mass. The Eucharist and prayer was very important to her,” said Mary Hasbrouck, CSJ.

“She was always kind to everybody,” recalled her niece, Marie Boland. “I’d like people to know that.”

John Christine was preceded in death by her parents and siblings Milly (Joe) Scheidnes, Ted (Jeanne) Wolkerstorfer, Carm (Don) Blomberg, Doris (Larry) Steiner, Rosemary Wolkerstorfer, Florence (George) Steffes, Jeanie (Frank) Ramisch, Al Wolkerstorfer, Terry (or William J.) Byrne and her very dear friend, Venard Blanz, CSJ. She is survived by many nieces and nephews, her caregivers at Carondelet Village, Sisters of St. Joseph and Consociates.

Mass of Christian Burial was celebrated at 11:00 a.m. on Thursday, August 13, 2017, preceded by visitation at 10:00 a.m. at Our Lady of the Presentation Chapel, 1884 Randolph Avenue, Saint Paul, Minnesota, 55105. Burial was at Resurrection cemetery in Mendota Heights, MN.

***May she rest in God’s love and peace.***