



Wake Stories of M. Floria Shannon, BVM

Caritas Studio, June 10, 2020

Eileen Healy, BVM

I knew Floria when she lived at Alleman School in Rock Island, Ill. I went on retreat there for many years. I remember when Floria was not making the retreat, that one day she made a roaster of caramel popcorn, which was very popular. It was, and still is, the best recipe for caramel popcorn I have ever tasted. I am very sorry I never got it from her. My other memory of her is as a cluster member. She was a very quiet, faithful cluster member; she came to all the meetings until she was too weak. She contributed quietly—sometimes with a smile, sometimes with a nod, sometimes with a word or two. If you know the makeup of our cluster, we are a lot of talkers. Floria was a nice exception to that. I worked with her for four years in the Motherhouse. Again, always faithful, always there, always available. She was just a very faithful worker.

Mike Shannon, nephew

Dorothy Ann, may you rest in peace now. You were loved by your family more than you know.

Maureen Shannon Skellenger, niece

Dorothy Ann, now you are at peace, no more pain and suffering. You are with God, the angels, and all of our family: parents, brothers and sister, in-laws, nieces and nephews, and your many friends. I will always remember our walks when you were a novice and we came to visit. You were always an inspiration. You will remain in my heart. Love to everyone.

Shelly, Jordan and family

You will be greatly missed at the family picnics and holidays. So many times you would make the trip with Anita to see everyone back home. Things won't be the same without you. Make sure to tell everyone "Hi" for us and help keep an eye on everyone. Lord knows we need all the help we can get! We will toast you soon with a margarita and will meet again another day. Until then, we love and miss you.

Jim, Cookie and family

Dorothy Ann, rest in peace and say hello to Anita for us. We will greatly miss your presence at family gatherings. We will miss your family stories, historical knowledge, and insight into many issues. We will also miss visiting Mount Carmel and the great welcome and hospitality we found there. Also the many evening phone conversations. You always had wise and telling comments, and we will all miss you.

Kathryn Johnson, niece of Anita Therese Hayes, BVM

Floria has been a bonus aunt to us forever! We will miss her greatly. She and Aunt Mary (Anita Therese Hayes) are together again. May they enjoy their glory in God!

Cathy Shannon

Your life was a blessing.
Your memory a treasure.
You are loved beyond words,
And missed beyond measure.

Martha Donnelly, PBVM

I met Floria many years ago at a meeting in Chicago. I noticed her name tag said Shannon. Her sister, Lucy, was married to my brother. Later that summer we met at a workshop at Clarke University. She took me to Marian Hall to see Rose Therese Donnelly, who was an outstanding math teacher. Lucy died after a tragic accident around 1995. Floria and I share three nephews, and her brother Harry was my high school classmate. I am very grateful to have known her. Rest in peace, Floria.

Mary McCauley, BVM

Besides being a member of Floria's set, it was my privilege to work with her in the 1990s when she served as one of the administrators of the Motherhouse. I believe that Floria truly enjoyed this ministry. Following this service, she assumed the role of receptionist at the BVM Center and as the coordinator of hospitality. Floria was caring, hospitable, gracious, warm, responsible, and friendly, so she was well suited for these positions. Through these ministries she came to know many BVMs, as well as their families, and for this she was truly grateful. The last few years when Floria experienced such serious illness were difficult. They were mysterious and challenging for her and for all who knew and loved her. I did my best to visit her as frequently as possible. She would always thank me for coming and suggest that I come again. While the pandemic did not permit me to see her during the final months of her life, I am confident that she knew that every member of her set, every member of her family, and all her other friends were with her in prayer and spirit. She now is the one who is remembering us. Thank you, Floria, for sharing life with us!

Christine Olsem, BVM Associate and administrative assistant in the Office of the Secretary

I greatly missed seeing and chatting with Floria on a regular basis after the BVM Center receptionist position was eliminated. I started working in the Secretary's Office in July 2011, but didn't even know she was the main receptionist for months because she was out ill recovering from shingles. Floria was always willing to help and every task was done to perfection. She just wanted to be of service. One of the tasks she tackled was to clean old BVM Directory binders to remove adhesive labels. They looked like new when she was finished. I last saw Floria to say goodbye the day before the Mount Carmel lockdown due to the pandemic. I asked her for what she wanted me to pray. "Patience," she responded without hesitation. It was a very long, hard struggle for her and for all those who loved her. Thank you, Floria, for everything you did for me and, most of all, for our times of sharing. Be at peace.

Kay O'Brien, East Moline, Ill.

Sister Floria and I were friends for over 40 years. She also was very close to my family. She was a strong, beautiful lady and an outstanding educator. My son Matthew, now 50 years old, has always said that Sister Floria was one of the best teachers he ever had. I was a substitute teacher at St. Anne School and an involved parent when Sister Floria was there. Sister was teaching many of my friends' children, and since we enjoyed her dedication and the caring way she approached each student, we asked her to join our birthday group. She attended for many years and even drove down from Dubuque for various occasions. Sister and I just really enjoyed each other's company. I visited Sister at Mount Carmel and we would chat over breakfast or lunch. She was so proud to tell about the talents and achievements of her family members. I liked visiting her in her apartment also because I got to see Sister Anita Therese Hayes, who was related to my aunt. Sister and I continued to have phone conversations as her health became an issue. She always told me to thank those members of that birthday club for the nice cards and letters. I am so glad that Sister Floria and I were so close. If situations were different, I would be in Dubuque for the services. You are a wonderful group of faith-filled women. God Bless.

Kathryn Lawlor, BVM

Floria taught my nieces, Liz and Abby, in second grade at Sacred Heart School in Davenport, Iowa. Abby's second grade class was very fond of Florian. At the end of their school year, Abby and her classmates rented a limousine and took Florian out for ice cream.

Ashley Kurt, niece of Anita Therese Hayes, BVM

Sweet, caring, loving, friend, compassionate, independent, helpful—these are a few words that come to mind when I think of Floria. She was such a good friend to Aunt Mary (Anita Therese Hayes) and she soon became part of our family. There are not too many times I remember Aunt Mary doing something and Floria not being there. They loved each other and treated each other like sisters. I'm grateful that I've had Floria to share memories with and connect with after the passing of Aunt Mary. It was great being able to hear stories from Floria, although I know how much Aunt Mary's passing hurt her heart.

After Aunt Mary passed, I called Floria each week to check in. Although the last time we were able to visit in person was November due to sicknesses and flu season and then COVID, we were very fortunate to be able to video chat because of the lovely Sister Lynn Lester. I can only hope that our chats gave Floria as much joy as they brought to our days. These were times we all looked forward to. Sister Lynn shared that the last video she saw was of Maggie giggling. It made her open her eyes and smile. Words weren't needed for her to express her love. When I had Maggie, she loved her like Aunt Mary would have and for that I am grateful. Her love and presence in our lives made us all better people.

She fought longer than any of us thought she could have. She sure wasn't one to give up and wanted to do things her own way—that was evident over the last year. After her feeding tube lasted only a couple hours, she told me she was ready to go whenever God was ready for her. It wasn't her decision to make. Now I'm sure she's eating lots of Skittles, giving all of our loved ones big hugs and filling them in on the latest shenanigans we are up to. We sure will miss you, Aunt Floria. God bless and we love you. Give Aunt Mary a big hug for us! Aunt Floria, you are part of the reason Mount Carmel will always hold a special place in our family's hearts.

Diane Forster, BVM

I lived with Floria when she was an administrator at the Motherhouse. Her concern for each resident as an individual and for the whole house was outstanding. She rejoiced, sympathized, and mourned with many sisters over events in their lives and in their families—over their declining health, over their recovery from illness or surgery, and many other concerns. In short, she was there for them.