



Born to New Life

Sister Concetta Russo, MPF



Sister Concetta Russo, MPF, died peacefully on Monday, March 17, 2025, at St. Joseph Hall, Villa Walsh, Morristown, New Jersey. She was 99 years of age.

Born in Waterbury, Connecticut on June 27, 1925, to a loving and faith-filled family, Sister Concetta came to know our community as a young woman and entered the Religious Teachers Filippini in 1951. She received the habit in 1952, and made her Perpetual Oblation in 1955. Sister Concetta studied English, earning a BA degree from the University of Rhode Island in Kingston, Rhode Island, and took additional courses in Library Science at Trenton State College (now The College of New Jersey) in Ewing, New Jersey.

In her 72 years of religious life, Sister Concetta served where needed and in varied capacities in the (arch)dioceses of Hartford, Newark, Paterson, Pittsburgh, and Providence. In the early years of her consecrated life, Sister Concetta ministered as an elementary classroom teacher, and as a vice-principal of an elementary school. She also served as a local convent superior. Sister Concetta returned to the Motherhouse at Villa Walsh in 1975, where she cared for the elderly and infirm Sisters, and diligently managed the convent spiritual center library.

From 1986 to 2014, Sister Concetta served the priests, seminarians, faculty, and students at the Monsignor James C. Turro Library at Immaculate Conception Seminary School of Theology at Seton Hall University in South Orange, New Jersey, with an interest and dedication second-to-none. It was also during this period that Sister Concetta offered 15 years of service as a member of the Commission for Christian Unity of the Archdiocese of Newark. In 2014, Sister Concetta retired from her position at Seton Hall University to reside at Villa Walsh. In 2019, due to declining health, she transitioned to St. Joseph Hall Infirmary.

The Most Reverend Arthur J. Serratelli, Bishop Emeritus of Paterson, offered the Mass of Christian Burial for Sister Concetta at St. Lucy Chapel, Villa Walsh on Friday, March 21, 2025. Six priests concelebrated the Liturgy. Sister Concetta's body was then laid to rest in Ave Maria Cemetery at Villa Walsh.

In his homily, Bishop Serratelli, who knew Sister Concetta from his years as a seminary professor, remarked, *"As librarian at Immaculate Conception Seminary, Sister Concetta not only helped us, both students and professors, find the information we needed, but by her cheerful disposition, she always lifted our spirits and directed our hearts to God. Her prayer life, her love of the Eucharist, her love of our Blessed Mother translated into her care and concern for others."*

Sister Ascenza Tizzano, General Superior, in her letter of sympathy to the Sisters of the Province shared, *"Whatever assignment Sister Concetta was given, she brought her full energy and dedication. We cannot forget the dedicated years Sister Concetta spent in Freytag Hall attending to the needs of our infirm sisters, although few at that time. Sister Concetta is most remembered, however, for her many years of service at the seminary library at Seton Hall where her efforts were very much appreciated by Monsignor Turro and also respected by the seminarians. How proud she was to receive invitations to be the lector at the first Mass of the newly ordained priests! ... At the core of Sister Concetta's accomplishments, she was a woman of deep prayer, faithful to many devotions, especially to Our Blessed Mother. She strongly upheld our Constitutions and will be remembered for her integrity and goodness. ... Psalm 116 beautifully summarizes Sister Concetta's life: 'Precious in the eyes of the Lord is the death of His faithful ones.' May Sister Concetta now rest in eternal peace."*

