



## Mrs. Sheila O. Vormwald

May 21, 1947 - August 22, 2016

Sheila O'Leary Vormwald, 69, of Cortland passed away Monday August 22, 2016 after a brief illness. Born May 21, 1947 in Cortland, Sheila was the daughter of Robert and Mary Clark O'Leary and a Cortland resident her entire life.

Sheila was a highly respected teacher with an accomplished career. She taught Kindergarten at St. Mary's Parochial School for 20 years, where she established the school's all-day Kindergarten program and was presented with a national award for her teaching excellence. Sheila then went on to teach at Homer Elementary School for 16 years before retiring, and also taught future teachers as an instructor at SUNY Cortland. Her passion for teaching led her to explore innovative ways for improving student learning, including developing a K-2 multi-age classroom at Homer. She touched the lives of many families in the community through her compassionate, patient, and loving approach to teaching children.

Sheila's abundant love was most profoundly seen with her own children and grandchildren. Her most valued moments were spending time with family, especially with her grandchildren. Sheila was known to her family and friends as a kind, loving person. Her generosity was awe-inspiring, she was a source of wisdom when asked for advice, and she was a genuinely good person, always taking the high road. Sheila enjoyed swimming with her family and friends, cooking for others, and meeting with friends at restaurants, especially the Community Restaurant, where she had a long family history. She also had a deep love of reading, enjoyed collecting books, and was a member of many book clubs.

She is survived by her four children, Joseph of Silver Springs, Maryland, Kristen (Ernest) Case of Cortland, David (Melisa) of Camillus and Sean (Ashley) of Homer, 9 grandchildren, Carlotta, Kirkland, Gildon and Porter Case, Ryan, Jonah and Samuel Vormwald, Anabel and Silvie Vormwald, her two brothers,; Patrick (Kathy) O'Leary of Oswego and Michael (Colleen) O'Leary of Manlius.

A Mass of Christian Burial will be celebrated on Saturday at 10 a.m. in St. Mary's Roman Catholic Church, prayers of committal will follow in St. Mary's Catholic Cemetery. The family will be present to receive friends on Friday from 4-7 p.m. in the chapel of Riccardi Funeral Home 69 N. Main St., Cortland, N.Y. The family has asked that in lieu of flowers contributions be made to, The Children's Room of Cortland Free Library. Condolences may also be sent by visiting [www.riccardifuneralhome.com](http://www.riccardifuneralhome.com)

Sheila will live on in the hearts of her family and friends, and through the impact she has made on the lives of people in the community

# Tribute Wall

LM

“ A true loss for all. She had both of my children in her kindergarten class at St. Mary's. Her love for teaching was evident everyday as was her joy. I am thankful she played a part in my children's lives.

Lee Mack - May 18, 2018 at 10:55 AM

SP

“ Sheila Vormwald touched more lives than can be easily imagined. There is a well-known writing called, *Everything I Need to Know I Learned in Kindergarten*. She is the person who taught all of the invaluable information that little ones learn in kindergarten to several generations of children in our area. Those children have grown up and become kind, loving parents and responsible citizens because of the values Mrs. Vormwald instilled and the positive behaviors she encouraged in her classroom. I know this because I saw how she taught my son and his classmates in the late 1980's at St. Mary's School. I also had many of these youngsters in my eighth grade English classrooms in Homer and Cortland and have some of their children in my religious education classes at St. Anthony's Church today. Kindergarten is a big adjustment, not just for the children, but even more so for their parents. Mrs. Vormwald always made us feel reassured and comfortable about all the new milestones our children were experiencing. Her professional knowledge was incomparable, and her warm, motherly manner was just what little children needed to get them started on the long path of education. What I also want people to remember about Mrs. Vormwald is her personal dignity. She was a great lady in all situations in life. I am sure that God has already said to her, *Welcome, thou good and faithful servant!* God bless you, Mrs. Vormwald, and thank you for everything you did for my child and countless others. Stephanie Passeri-Densmore (8th Grade English Teacher)

Stephanie Passeri-Densmore - May 18, 2018 at 10:55 AM

MC

“ I am so sorry for your loss. It is a loss to so many. Mrs. V. was a teacher to two of my children and a beloved friend to all of us. I will so miss her.

Margaret Capps - May 18, 2018 at 10:55 AM

KL

“ I had the honor of working with Sheila while I was the principal at St. Mary's in the late 1980's. It was my first principalship and I am forever grateful for the exceptional leadership, dedication, and commitment Sheila demonstrated each day for the school and her students. A truly gifted teacher and mom. Her memory lives on through the thousands of lives she shaped and molded through her teaching.

Ken LaLonde - May 18, 2018 at 10:55 AM

MD

“ Words are not available to properly express the profound loss of my classmate and friend, Sheila. During our 13 years at SMS, Sheila was always a positive influence to anyone who had the good fortune to have her as an advocate!! On so many occasions Sheila opened her doors to welcome one and all to make everyone feel welcome. Many may have been her equal in the classroom, but no one did it better than Sheila. My friend will be forever missed !!!! May the peace of the Lord be with you Sheila.

Mike Dexter - May 18, 2018 at 10:55 AM

RV

“ to joe and the vormwald family please except my condolence at this time when i heard about her illness i was sad and when she died all i could think of was she was not in pain anymore i enjoyed getting to know her even if it was for a brief time she treated me like family your in my thoughts and prayers

rebecca vormwald - May 18, 2018 at 10:55 AM

LM

“ Wonderful Mass for a Good Example in many lives. Rest in peace, Shelia.

Lucy&Jim Murphy - May 18, 2018 at 10:55 AM

SD

“ Our daughter was blessed to have Sheila for first and second grade at Homer Elementary. Not only was Sheila a gifted teacher she was a kind and generous person. In her life she touched countless lives, we are so fortunate to be counted among those people.

Sarah Discenza - May 18, 2018 at 10:55 AM

LB

“ We were so fortunate to have Mrs. V. as our daughter's teacher for three wonderful years in her Multi-age class. She had a way of making everyone she encountered feel welcome and at ease. It was because of Mrs. V. that our daughter became a teacher herself. She will be truly missed. Tim, Lou Anne & Steph Barrington

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Lou Anne Barrington - May 18, 2018 at 10:55 AM



“ Sheila was the first teacher our daughter Cat had at St. Mary's kindergarten. We are both forever grateful for the love and generosity that she gave. It was such a positive experience. I had occasion to observe Sheila in a classroom at Homer Elementary a few years ago. After almost 30 years, she was still sharing that generous spirit & love with those children. God Bless. My sincere condolences go out to her family on the passing of this beautiful woman.

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August 26, 2016 at 12:00 AM