

In Loving Memory

Sister Clarence Marie Baivier, SSND



Birth
June 22, 1929

Baptism
July 14, 1929

Profession
August 6, 1948

Death
May 6, 2012

Burial
Notre Dame of
Elm Grove Cemetery
Elm Grove, Wisconsin

*Precious and blessed is
the death of the faithful
before God... for
they die in union with
their dear Jesus, in the
grace of God, in peace.*

Blessed Theresa of Jesus Gerhardinger
Foundress of the School Sisters of Notre Dame
Letter 11, September 10, 1831

Dolores Baivier was born to Clarence Baivier and Marie LeMoine in Milwaukee on June 22, 1929, and baptized at St. Elizabeth Church. Being an only child, she enjoyed time with lots of friends in the neighborhood and in the park across the street from their home. Her dad was captain of a boys' ball team and helped lots of kids with activities, so that gave her the opportunity to enjoy games, swimming, skating, etc. with many friends.

Dolores attended Fratney Street School for two years before enrolling in St. Elizabeth's. There she became very fond of the sisters, and in the fifth grade, she felt her first attraction to religious life, due in part to the happy disposition of her favorite teacher, Sister Mary Edmund. This sister enjoyed being with the children on the playground, even outside of school time. Dolores was there often, and she loved to spend time with her.

After graduation from St. Elizabeth's, Dolores went to Messmer High School for two years, and then entered the candidature of the School Sisters of Notre Dame. Being an only child, her parents found it hard to have her leave home, so Sister Seraphia allowed them to keep in touch with her occasionally.

On her reception day, August 5, 1947, Dolores received the name Novice Clarence Marie (honoring her parents), and she was professed in 1948. She was assigned a variety of ministries in different places over the years:

1948: Notre Dame, Chippewa Falls, Wis.: Teacher-Primary

1954: St. Patrick, Chesterton, Ind.: Teacher-Intermediate

1955: St. Augustine, Milwaukee, Wis.: Teacher-Intermediate

1963: St. Nicholas, Milwaukee, Wis.: Principal and Teacher-Junior High

1969: Notre Dame of the Lake, Mequon, Wis.: Director of Initial Formation

1971: St. Nicholas, Milwaukee, Wis.: Principal

1976: Notre Dame of the Lake, Mequon, Wis.: Business Manager of
The School Sister magazine

1982: St. Mary Czestochowa, Milwaukee, Wis.: Pastoral Ministry

1991: Notre Dame of Elm Grove, Wis.: Pastoral Ministry

Regarding her early years as a teacher, she wrote that, after her preliminary instructions, she felt ready to "set the educational world afire!" St. Nicholas School in Milwaukee was one of her favorite missions. Sister Clarence Marie felt she was assigned to run the best school possible. She loved the teachers, students and parents – all striving for a spirit of community.

After years in education and school ministry, as well as service to the SSND community in the areas of formation and then communications, Sister Clarence Marie began 16 years in the field of pastoral ministry. When

continued

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she applied for a position at Notre Dame of Elm Grove, she described the necessary qualifications: “I had to be able to listen with my heart, communicate well – even if the message was hard to hear, be able to size up situations, be compassionate to a point of ‘walking in another’s moccasins,’ and thus able to advocate and empower.” Of this experience she later wrote, “There were sisters who felt useless and were not able to pray. I tried to emphasize that it is not what you do, but who you are, that counts in the eyes of our compassionate God.”

In 1999, Sister Clarence Marie decided that it was time to begin her own retirement. She moved to Notre Dame of Elm Grove in 2004. In planning for her funeral liturgy, she asked to have *A Clown’s Prayer* included in the service. Often thinking of herself as a clown, Sister loved to tell jokes.

Sister Clarence lived the following *Clown Prayer* for many years here on earth and now is surely spreading God’s joy as a clown in heaven!

“Dear Lord, as I stumble through this life,
help me create more laughter than tears,
dispense more happiness than gloom,
spread more cheer than despair.

“Never let me become so indifferent that I will fail
to see the wonder in the eyes of a child
or the twinkle in the eyes of the aged.

“Never let me forget that my work is to cheer people,
make them happy and make them laugh,
and make them forget at least momentarily
all the unpleasantness in their lives.

“And, in my final moment, dear God, may I hear You whisper,
‘When you made My people smile, you made Me smile.’”

By Sister Mary Hope Tritz, SSND