

# *In Loving Memory*

## Sister Dorothy [Mary Lenore] Leiting, SSND

“Awed by the mystery of God’s action  
in our midst, we gratefully celebrate life!”

(From *You Are Sent*, our SSND constitution, paragraph 7)



**Birth**  
May 17, 1935

**Baptism**  
June 2, 1935

**Profession**  
July 12, 1955

**Death**  
May 14, 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

**F**or a number of years, Dorothy was unable to express herself clearly because of continuing physical complications. Therefore, it seems appropriate to simply let her tell her own story, using her autobiography, written when she was a novice and updated several years ago. Dorothy writes:

“It is only fitting that I begin by mentioning the two persons who played such an important part of my life, my dear parents, Anna Schackmuth and Leo Leiting. May God bless them for their unselfish love and the countless sacrifices they have made for me throughout my life.

“Life began for me in one of the most beautiful months of the year, May. To be more exact it was the seventeenth of May, 1935, in the city of Kenosha, Wis. When I arrived there was already a five-year-old brother, Richard, to welcome me. Perhaps it would be more correct to say, when ‘we’ arrived – for God was so generous, He gave Mother and Dad not one, but two bundles of joy – a little boy and a little girl. My twin was named Leo Donald, after Dad, and I, Dorothy Ann, after mother. Seeing that I was born ten minutes before he was, he used to tease me by saying, ‘I was a gentleman and let the lady go first!’

“When I was four years old God gave me a little sister, whom we called Nancy Marie. Six years later, my sister Mary Ellen was born and four years after that, Linda Lee. When I was a sophomore in high school, Carol Ann, the last child to grace our immediate family, was born. God certainly was good to place me in such a large family. I can never thank Him enough!

“Seeing I wasn’t born with infused knowledge I was among the many who had to go to school. After kindergarten I spent nine years at St. George School, Kenosha, taught by the School Sisters of Notre Dame. It was while I was in second grade that I first thought of becoming an SSND. I entered the aspiranture in Prairie du Chien and I was a candidate, postulant and novice at the Milwaukee motherhouse.

“When I entered the novitiate, in 1954, the Marian Year, I was given the name Sister Mary Leonore. I believe I was given the name because my father’s name is Leo. After my profession in 1955, I began my ministry of teaching, which I loved.”

1955: Mount Mary College, Milwaukee, Wis.: Student

1956: St. Anthony, Chicago, Ill.: Teacher-Primary

1964: St. Francis, Milwaukee, Wis.: Teacher-Primary

*continued*

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*Sister Dorothy Leiting*



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**School Sisters  
of Notre Dame**  
Central Pacific Province

TRANSFORMING THE WORLD  
THROUGH EDUCATION

- 1970: Clarke College, Dubuque, Iowa: Student
- 1971: Holy Childhood, Harbor Springs, Mich.: Teacher-Primary
- 1971: St. Mary, Elm Grove, Wis.: Teacher-Primary
- 1973: St. Anne, Milwaukee, Wis.: Teacher-Primary
- 1981: Holy Angels, West Bend, Wis.: Teacher-Primary
- 1986: Holy Assumption, West Allis, Wis.: Teacher-Primary
- 1990: Holy Assumption, West Allis, Wis.: Tutor, Librarian

“While at Holy Assumption in 1986 I woke up one night around 10 o'clock with severe chest pains. 911 was called. In March 1990, I had open heart surgery and recuperated at Elm Grove. I returned to the school, helping with reading groups and in the library. This led to the gradual letting go of teaching, which I dearly loved.

“I responded to the need for a driver at Our Lady of Mount Carmel, Mount Calvary, Wis., and, beginning in 1992, I spent 12 years of service in this way. In October 2002, an angioplasty revealed 70 percent blockage in a different part of the heart. Sunday morning, January 25, 2003, I became very sick with chest pains. I was flown to Froedtert Hospital, where I was anointed and had, for the second time, a near death experience. Miraculously I recovered and returned to Mount Calvary. I moved to Notre Dame of Elm Grove on July 30, 2004. I am at peace in my heart and feel secure that my health needs are being met.”

Dorothy’s written words end here – words so typical of her gentle, grateful and loving self. Surely she would express a deep thank you to her family, dear friends, sisters, classmates and loving caretakers over these past years, and reassure us with the quotation printed on cover of the worship aid for her funeral: “I cannot describe my interior peace! Now I am in Jesus!” (Mother Theresa Gerhardinger)

The last years of Dorothy’s life are reflected in another quote for our foundress. The quote is engraved on our Notre Dame pin: “All the works of God proceed slowly and in pain, but then their roots are the sturdier and their flowering the lovelier!” Having recently celebrated Dorothy’s 77<sup>th</sup> birthday, we join with her in celebrating the flowering of her new life! Yes, Dorothy, now you truly are in Jesus. Send each of us a bit of His peace!

*By Sister Sharon Roedl, SSND*