

# *In Loving Memory*

## Sister M. Celeste Glovka, SSND



Birth  
October 3, 1913

Baptism  
October 4, 1913

Profession  
August 9, 1933

Death  
August 27, 2012

Burial  
Our Lady of Good  
Counsel Cemetery  
Mankato, Minnesota

*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

**S**ister M. Celeste Glovka, 98, died August 27, 2012, in Notre Dame Health Care Center, Our Lady of Good Counsel Campus, Mankato, Minnesota. Sister Celeste shared in the SSND presence on Good Counsel Hill for almost 93 of the “100 Years on the Hill” which are being celebrated this year.

Sister Celeste (Viola Glovka) came from an exceptional family situation. Her father was married in Adrian, Minnesota in 1900. Two sons were born before their mother died in 1904. In 1908 Henry married Mary Weber in Lismore, Minnesota. A daughter was born on October 3, 1913, and given the name Viola Mary at her baptism the next day in St. Francis Xavier Church, Windom. Two years later another child was born. Sister Celeste wrote, “At the birth of my brother Edward on December 2, my mother became ill because of blood poisoning and died on December 11. My brother was placed in an orphanage in Sioux City, and my mother’s sister took me into her family.” Because of her own growing family, Viola’s aunt could no longer care for her, and Viola’s maternal grandparents, who lived in Windom, became her next family. Sister Celeste continued, “They still had two girls at home who wanted to go to a Catholic high school, so my grandparents moved to Mankato in the spring of 1919.” About the same time Viola’s father moved to Davenport, Iowa, where he married for a third time, and Edward joined the family there.

In 1919, Good Counsel Academy was a day and boarding school for grades one through 12. In an article for *ReEchoes*, Good Counsel Academy’s alumnae newsletter, Sister Celeste described her school days, “In September, my two aunts and I registered at Good Counsel. One joined a sewing class, the other became a freshman. I entered the first grade. I was five years old. So now each morning we walked eight blocks and climbed 217 steps. I was a member of a classroom group of about 10 pupils. We were in five different grades.” Viola completed eight grades in seven years and graduated from eighth grade in 1926. During this time, she remained in contact with her father and later commented, “My dad did not forget me. There were visits to Mankato and birthday presents every year. During those visits, I began getting acquainted with Eddie.”

As a high school student, Viola continued to walk eight blocks and climb 217 steps, and was possibly the only student to have attended Good Counsel Academy for all 12 grades. It was during her senior retreat at Good Counsel that Viola made the decision to enter SSND. She had been thinking about being a sister and considered joining her aunt in the Rochester Franciscans or perhaps Maryknoll. She recalled, “I’ll never forget it. It was February 2, 1930. As I was coming from Holy Communion (I still remember the spot) I heard the words, ‘My child to Notre Dame.’” She entered the candidature on August 27, the same day on which she died 82 years later.

*continued*

# In Loving Memory



*Sister M. Celeste Glovka*



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**School Sisters  
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Central Pacific Province

TRANSFORMING THE WORLD  
THROUGH EDUCATION

At her reception into the Novitiate in 1932, she received the name Sister Celeste, taken from “Celestine,” a high school friend’s name that she liked. She professed her vows in 1933 and then was sent to teach primary grades at St. Matthew School, St. Paul.

Sister Celeste was transferred to St. Joseph School, Spokane, Washington, in 1936 and to Christ the King, Omak, Washington, in 1944. She continued her family story, “Eddie was stationed in North Africa, and in their march to Germany, they came through Anzio, Italy, where a terrible battle was fought. Here Eddie was killed. We received word of his death August 13, 1944. ... His grave is in the National Cemetery near Florence. When I was in Europe at the time before Golden Jubilee, I was privileged to visit Eddie’s grave and lay a wreath of flowers on it.”

After one year in Omak, Sister Celeste moved to SS. Peter & Paul School, Springbrook, Iowa, until 1951, when she returned to Washington, this time to Holy Family School, Clarkston, where she taught for 10 years. Usually, sisters stationed in Washington did not come back to Mankato for retreat or college classes. Sister Celeste spent summers at Colton, Washington, or attended classes at Holy Names and Gonzaga, both in Spokane. She earned her B.A. from Holy Names in 1941 and her M.A. from Gonzaga in 1962. Sister Celeste also taught at St. Michael, Prior Lake (1961-67); St. John, Jordan, where she was also principal (1967-69); St. Peter, Mendota (1969-70); St. Anne, Bismarck, North Dakota (1970-72); Guardian Angel-St. Boniface, Colton, Washington (1972-75); and Trinity, Spokane (1975-81). In Spokane, Sister Celeste also ministered to the homebound. She retired from fulltime teaching in 1981 and moved to Gilbertville, Iowa, where she directed the learning center and library until 1989. Sister Celeste spent the next year visiting the elderly at Holy Childhood Parish, St. Paul, and moved to Good Counsel in 1990.

Until her “full” retirement in 2002, Sister Celeste immersed herself into life on the Hill, serving especially as a companion for sisters with medical appointments. She also worked in the Good Counsel Library for a number of years and was a prolific letter writer to the elderly, to friends, and to former students. She enjoyed reading and working crossword puzzles, and she especially liked to play “UpWords,” a Scrabble-like game. Sister Celeste was also an active participant in the “Nun Study.”

Sister Celeste, a gentle woman, was always faithful to prayer and, whenever possible, prayed with the community. On the occasion of her 75<sup>th</sup> Jubilee in 2008, she wrote, “God has been very good to me over these 75 years as a School Sister of Notre Dame. I owe Him great love and thanks.”

The funeral Mass for Sister Celeste, with Father Don Rauscher, S.J., as presider, was Friday, August 31, in Good Counsel Chapel, followed by burial in Good Counsel Cemetery. She is survived by cousins. She was preceded in death by her parents, Henry and Mary (Weber) Glovka, a brother Edward, and two half-brothers, Emil and Bernard.

*By Sister Mary Kay Ash, SSND*