

In Loving Memory

Sister Mary Justin Popowski, SSND



Birth
August 8, 1932

Baptism
August 21, 1932

Profession
July 12, 1954

Death
March 30, 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

Sister Mary Justin was born on August 8, 1932 in Detroit, Mich. to Boleslaw and Casimira (Halabuza) Popowski, and was baptized Rosemary Ann. The last of seven children, she had three brothers and three sisters: Amelia (Millie) Schlessler (deceased), Raymond (deceased), Genevieve Turckes, Paul (deceased), Julius (Jules) and Veronica (Vera) Heizyk. Both of her parents were of Polish descent, although her father, a Ford factory worker, was born in Russia.

The School Sisters of Notre Dame were Rosemary's teachers at St. Anthony, Detroit, where she attended grade and high school. After graduating in 1950, she got a job working in an office, until she decided to enter the convent, two years later. She received the name of Sister Mary Justin on July 7, 1953, and professed her first vows on July 12, 1954.

Her ministry experiences include:

1954: Mount Mary College, Milwaukee, Wis.: Student

1955: St. Hyacinth, Milwaukee, Wis.: Teacher-Elementary

1956: St. Hyacinth, Milwaukee, Wis.: Teacher-Intermediate

1960: St. Mary, Grand Rapids, Mich.: Teacher-Intermediate

1962: Notre Dame of the Lake, Mequon, Wis.: Staff-Maintenance

1963: SS. Peter and Paul, Gary, Ind.: Teacher-Intermediate

1976: Notre Dame of DePere, DePere, Wis.: Teacher-Junior High

1989: Motherhouse, Milwaukee, Wis.: Computer Specialist

1997: SSND Provincial Offices, Elm Grove, Wis.: Computer Specialist

2003: SSND Provincial Offices, Elm Grove, Wis.: Database Coordinator

2007: Notre Dame of Elm Grove, Elm Grove, Wis.: Retired

2010: St. Joseph, Cambellsport, Wis.: Retired

2011: Our Lady of the Angels, Greenfield, Wis.: Retired

Sister's reputation as a teacher was that of being strict, but very thorough. Her students were often several levels above their high school classmates. As much as she was strict in the classroom, she was also a lot of fun. There are stories of her playing baseball with the children after school and sometimes, at night, they would go into the dark school for the great fun of flashlight tag.

Math seemed to be her strong and favorite subject. Sister Justin was a forerunner in the teaching of computer science in the junior high while living in DePere. Her experience and knowledge led her to retire from the classroom and to serve the community in the province computer department, which she did for 18 years.

continued

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

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Sister Justin, who loved to visit her family, valued family above all else. She would tell friends to enjoy their families while they still have them. Proud of her Polish heritage, Sister made a trip to Poland when she celebrated her silver jubilee in 1979. This joy was remembered by attending Milwaukee's Polish Fest each summer.

In 2007, Sister Justin retired from the computer department and had more time to enjoy walks around the Notre Dame of Elm Grove campus. A nature-lover, she'd look for the moon at night and notice the animals around the yard during the day.

Mechanically inclined, Sister Justin enjoyed making rosaries. Her favorite football team was, of course, the Green Bay Packers; her favorite cartoon was Marmaduke. She loved ice cream with chocolate syrup and lots of pecans. A visitor from Detroit could make her day by bringing a loaf of rye bread from the Sweetheart Bakery.

Sister Justin's friends were very dear to her and describe her as loyal and caring. Community members often experienced being teased by her or being elbowed by her at just the most appropriate moment. Though she was quiet and a little shy in a group, she was one who lived life fully – working hard when she worked, laughing and having fun when she wasn't working, and loving the people of her life with gusto.

A visitation and wake service were held at Our Lady of the Angels on April 3, 2012 and at Notre Dame of Elm Grove on April 4, 2012, followed by the Mass of Christian Burial. Sister Justin is survived by Rosemary Barker, Marie Brown, Joyce Dew and Joseph Turckes, other relatives, friends and the SSND Community.

We thank God for the life and richness of our sister, Justin. We will miss the unique person she was, as she witnessed God's love in her life. May she rest in the eternal peace of God's love.

By Sister Mary Elise Zettel, SSND