



**Birth**  
May 11, 1918

**Baptism**  
May 12, 1918

**Profession**  
July 20, 1939

**Death**  
April 20, 2014

**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

## *In Loving Memory*

### Sister Mary Margit Loeffler, SSND

Sister Margit's story began while World War I was still raging. She was born in Germany on May 11, 1918 in the city hospital of Neuburg an der Donau. Marie was the name given to her at birth by the Sister of St. Vincent de Paul who baptized her and the name Emma was added at her church baptism.

Emma lived a happy family life in the village of Hutting. The family's farm was scattered in the valley and on the hillsides. She had an older sister and three younger brothers. Each child had jobs to do. Her tasks were to help her mother clean and to take care of her brothers and neighbor children.

At the age of five, Emma went to Augsburg to attend kindergarten. She lived with her aunt. This was her first acquaintance with School Sisters of Notre Dame which birthed the idea to be a teacher. The last years of grade school she attended needlework and sewing classes taught by SSNDs. That was when she learned she could be both a sister and a kindergarten teacher if she entered the "aspirantura" at the motherhouse in Munich. Her parents made great sacrifices for her to do this.

When Emma was 16, she entered the candidature. She worked hard to meet the requirements and passed the state board requirements. She then spent a happy year teaching kindergarten in Peiting.

Unfortunately, the political situation was grave and many convent schools were taken over by Hitler's regime. The future for religious life was dark and uncertain. A ray of hope came in a letter from the United States. Mother Mary Medulpha Ebner extended an invitation to come to Milwaukee. Emma joined two other postulants, two novices and five sisters who made the sacrifice of leaving their homeland in order to continue their religious life and ministry within the congregation. Arriving at the Milwaukee motherhouse in early September 1937, she began the process of adjusting to a new country and continued studies and preparation for reception.

Her time in the novitiate was a great trial period because of the war that was on the verge of breaking out. Anxiety over her loved ones and country was great. They had limited information through the Red Cross. Their greatest comfort was to send care packages, especially after the war. Sister Margit expressly thanked Mother Mary Fidelis Krieter and Father Vincent Nels, CPPS, for their help. Sister Margit's mother said repeatedly that Emma was the greatest blessing for them in exchange for the huge sacrifice all of them made in her leaving Germany.

Sister Margit professed first vows on July 20, 1939 and was initially assigned to work in the tapestry room. Later she helped in the infirmary when a nurse took sick. Neither of these assignments were what she had prepared for. She said, "Many a tear dropped into the dishwasher."

From 1943-1946 she was in training with Marquette School of Nursing at St. Joseph Hospital in Milwaukee. When the end of war in Europe was

*continued*

# In Loving Memory



*Sister Margit Loeffler*



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**School Sisters  
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declared and the defeat of Germany was broadcast on the radio, everyone was jubilant. As she stood with other hospital staff members at the nurses' station, she was stunned and speechless. She commented, "One of the doctors put his hand on my shoulder and said, 'Sister, pray and hope for a better future.'"

She received her nurse's certificate from Marquette University, Milwaukee in 1946. When a new psychiatric unit was being planned at Elm Grove, nurses were asked for input. Her training had involved psychiatric nursing so she provided helpful feedback. Later Mother Mary Andrina Aalbers asked her to open the new 50-bed psychiatric unit and to serve as the nursing administrator and local superior. Sister Margit possessed a calming presence and moral authority.

Sister Margit said of her nursing years, "I ministered to the sick and dying. I was personally enriched by their life of fidelity and their faith filled struggles in life and death."

In 1957 she was able to visit her dear ones in Germany. The joy of that reunion, she said could not be described. Her father had died earlier. Her three brothers had served in the army until the end of World War II and had survived. Other home visits followed but she was always glad to return to her SSND community in the United States.

Sister Margit ministered 52 years as a registered nurse and nurse supervisor. She served at the Milwaukee motherhouse infirmary from 1946-1954 and the Notre Dame Health Care Center in Elm Grove, Wisconsin from 1954-1998. In 1998, she moved to a new part-time ministry, assisting at the NDEG dental office for ten years. With retirement in 2008, she enjoyed praying, reading, gardening, cooking and baking. She moved to Notre Dame of Elm Grove in 2012 where she continued to share her gifts of prayer and presence.

Easter Sunday, April 20, 2014, about 8 a.m., in the midst of rejoicing in and praising our resurrected Lord, Sister Margit's journey on earth ended. The words of Psalm 63, "O God, you are my God, for you I long" were fulfilled for her. Her passing marks the end of an era. She was the last surviving member of the group of postulants, novices and sisters who emigrated from Germany to the United States in 1937. She faithfully followed God's call. With what exuberance she must have responded when she heard, "Well done, good and faithful loved one. Enter into the joy of your Lord and Spouse."

Sister Margit Loeffler is survived by her loving extended family of nieces and nephews from Germany, dear friends and the SSND Community.

Thank you, Holy God, for your gift to us of Sister Margit. Alleluia!

*By Sister Joan Emily Kaul, SSND*