



Birth
August 5, 1925

Baptism
August 8, 1925

Profession
July 21, 1946

Death
January 12, 2015

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

In Loving Memory

Sister Marion [Edward Marie] Fritz, SSND

Sister Marion (Edward Marie) Fritz, 89, died Monday, January 12, 2015, in Notre Dame Health Care, Our Lady of Good Counsel, Mankato, Minn. Her three sisters, Ivona, Rosemary and Lorraine, her good friend, Sister Andrea Zelenak, and several other sisters were with her when she died.

Sister Marion began her autobiography: "It was the end of summer; not very warm as summers can be because it was August 5, 1925, in Yorkton, Saskatchewan, Canada. Yes, it was on the feast of Our Lady of Snows that my father, Edward Lawrence Fritz and my mother, Eleanor Marie Diekmann, were proud parents of a baby girl, the first of eight children to bless their home." Three days later she was baptized Marion Evelyn at St. Gerard Majella Church, Yorkton. Nineteen months later, her sister Elizabeth (Sister Pauline) was born, and shortly after her birth the family moved to the United States, eventually settling on a farm near Lafayette, Minn. Three sons were born in Lafayette; three daughters joined the family after a move to North Mankato.

Sister Marion credits her vocation to her family's strong faith. She shared at the time of her Golden Jubilee, "I recall my mother praying with the younger brothers and sisters. And I can still hear her saying to those of us who were older, 'Don't forget your prayers.' There were other times when prayer was part of our daily routine. We burned blessed palm and prayed for safety when a storm arose. We prayed for Dad to come home safely from work . . . In deep gratitude, I thank God for parents who knew God as their source of life and instilled that in me and my brothers and sisters." For several years, Marion attended a country school, and Sunday School at Holy Trinity in New Ulm, some distance from their home. Sisters of Christian Charity taught at Trinity. In 1936 the family moved just outside of North Mankato, and the Fritz children attended Holy Rosary School, taught by School Sisters of Notre Dame. Sister Marion wrote, "I remember how gentle and loving the sisters were to us. Their kindness to us and their happy spirit is a deep memory." It came as no surprise that Marion entered the aspiranture at Good Counsel Academy in 1939.

After high school graduation in 1943, Marion became an SSND candidate and started college classes. As a second-year candidate, she taught 56 second graders at St. Agnes, St. Paul. At her reception into the novitiate in 1945, she was given the name Edward Marie after her mother and father. She later returned to her baptismal name. Sister Marion's entire time of ministry was spent in the state of Minnesota. Following first profession of vows in 1946, she began her classroom teaching ministry at St. Michael School, Madison, where she stayed until 1949. She continued this ministry at St. Dominic, Northfield (1949-51); St. Mary, Worthington (1951-54); St. Andrew, St. Paul (1954-58); St. Philip, Minneapolis (1958-60); St. Mark, Shakopee, where she was also principal (1960-65); and St. Matthew, St. Paul (1965-67). In 1967, she was part of the inaugural staff for the new Epiphany School in Coon Rapids.

continued

In Loving Memory



Sister Marion Fritz



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**School Sisters
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Central Pacific Province

TRANSFORMING THE WORLD
THROUGH EDUCATION

In 1969, she responded to a need at Providence School of St. John Vianney Parish, South St. Paul. The sisters who staffed the school were leaving to return to their Chicago home territory, and it looked as though the school would be closed. Sister Marion was asked if she would become principal of Providence and she accepted. When a director of religious education (DRE) position became available, Sister Marion resigned as principal and served the parish in that position. Sister Marion stayed at Providence/St. John Vianney until 1979. During the 1979-80 school year, Sister Marion studied at Gonzaga University, Spokane, Washington, earning a master's degree in biblical studies and spirituality. Earlier she had earned a bachelor's degree in history and English from Mount Mary College, Milwaukee, (1957) and a master's degree in developmental and remedial reading from St. Thomas College, St. Paul (1965).

As the DRE at St. John Vianney, Sister Marion started the first family religious education program in the archdiocese. Following her year at Gonzaga, she worked extensively in parishes with this type of program, helping parents to prepare their children to receive the sacraments and grow in faith at St. Stephen, Anoka (1980-82); St. John the Baptist, Savage (1982-86); Resurrection, Minneapolis (1986-88); St. John Neumann, Eagan (1988-98); and St. Peter, Richfield (1998-2007). She described her time in religious education as "years of challenge in changing times, demanding both creativity and continuing growth."

While at St. Peter, Richfield, Sister Marion moved into part time work and, in 2007, began a volunteer ministry at St. Richard, Richfield. She also volunteered at Minnesota Life College in Richfield, a school for students with learning disabilities such as ADHD, autism, Asperger's syndrome and related disorders. She wrote about her experience, "This has been a real blessing for me to discover this educational gift to special-needs young people. As a volunteer, I have been so impressed with the spirit among the staff and their care for the students. This has been a beautiful way to end a teaching/education career."

In 2011, Sister Marion came to Good Counsel where she actively participated in community and prayer life. Throughout her life, her family was extremely important to her, as evidenced by the frequent visits of family members, especially her sisters. She was a willing participant in any type of card game and was also an avid reader.

The funeral Mass for Sister Marion, with Father Eugene Stenzel as presider, was held January 16 in Good Counsel Chapel, Mankato. She is survived by her sisters, Ivona Wichmann, Rosemary (Marlin) Reiners, and Lorraine (David) Kaiser; her brothers, Marvin (Jan) and Bob; her sister-in-law, Helen; nieces and nephews, and her sisters in community, the School Sisters of Notre Dame. She was preceded in death by her parents, Edward and Eleanor Diekmann Fritz, her sister, Sister Pauline Fritz, SSND, and her brother, Loren.

By Sister Mary Kay Ash, SSND