



**Birth**  
July 2, 1920

**Baptism**  
July 4, 1920

**Profession**  
July 20, 1939

**Death**  
March 23, 2013

**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 Edmund Burki, SSND

The theme song – the thread running all through her life – God Is Good!

On the beautiful feast of Our Lady’s Visitation, July 2, 1920, she was born, and on July 4, she was given supernatural life. Now Mary Ann Burki, nicknamed “Mickey,” belonged to the people of God.

God is good! She grew up in a really good Christian home, made so by her parents, Edmund and Anna (Schilter) Burki – “down to earth” and yet “up in heaven” Catholics in the true meaning of the word “Catholic.” Two brothers, Edmund and Joseph, were also gifts of God’s goodness to her.

St. Boniface, Milwaukee, was her home parish, and the life of this parish was an integral part in their home and in her life up to the day of her entrance into Notre Dame. As far back as she could recollect, she was going “to be a Sister,” so throughout her school days she kept close to the Sisters. She said she was extremely fortunate in having the wonderful principals and teachers.

It was while she was in fourth grade that Mary Ann experienced a great sorrow and a great joy. This was a difficult year for her since her mother, whom she loved so very dearly, died, leaving a great void in their home. But Mary Ann could recall vividly from the very evening of her mother’s death and on through each year up to his own death, a tremendous lesson her father tried to teach his children – acceptance of God’s will. Her father became both father and mother to Mary Ann and her brothers. She drew closer and closer to her father. Six months after the death of my mother she experienced the joy of her first personal encounter with Jesus Christ. She felt so proud to think she could “help mother by giving her my First Holy Communion.”

God is good! She felt blessed by His invitation to Notre Dame. As far back as she could remember, she wanted to be a sister. After eighth grade graduation, she entered SSND and spent two years as a junior candidate and two years as a senior candidate. She was received July 19, 1938 and given the religious name Mary Edmund. Her first vows were professed on July 20, 1939. Sister Mary Edmund received bachelor’s degrees in organ and music theory from Mount Mary College, Milwaukee, in 1950 and in church music from the University of Montreal, Gregorian Institute of America, Toledo, Ohio in 1953. She earned a master’s degree in music from the Wisconsin Conservatory, Milwaukee in 1952.

Sister Mary Edmund was grateful that God gave her the privilege to live with and know many truly great women – witnesses, as religious, to Jesus Christ! She ministered for 50 years as an educator, musician and administrator. While a candidate, she taught music for one year at Academy of Our Lady, Chicago. All of her assignments as a professed sister were in Wisconsin: St. Elizabeth, Milwaukee; Mount Mary College, Milwaukee; Holy Name, Sheboygan; St. Francis Xavier, Green Bay; St. Leo, Milwaukee; St. Paul, Bloomer; Sacred Hearts of Jesus and Mary, Sun Prairie; Our Lady of Mount Carmel, Mount Calvary; and St. Stanislaus, Berlin. She retired

*continued*

# In Loving Memory



*Sister Mary Edmund Burki*



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

TRANSFORMING THE WORLD  
THROUGH EDUCATION

in 1989 but continued to serve the SSND community at the motherhouse in Milwaukee. In 1997, she moved to Notre Dame of Elm Grove where she ministered through prayer, presence and service.

Her father wrote to a Notre Dame Sister, concerning his daughter after she had been professed 20 years, – “I know that very few, if any, of her accomplishments I can credit to myself, but are the result of the training and teaching of the superiors and teachers of the Notre Dame Sisters. I thank the good Lord for the past favors and pray daily that Sister will always be a credit to the Notre Dame Order.” While Sister Mary Edmund credited her mother, and more especially her father, with teaching the very important lessons in life – faith, resignation, love, an understanding and sympathy for others and always a deep gratitude to God and all my benefactors, she was most grateful to all her Superiors and companion-Sisters, to Notre Dame, for the countless blessings and privileges which came to her. Many can attest to the fact that Sister Mary Edmund was, is, and always will be a priceless, cherished credit to Notre Dame.

To cite one example, there is a quote from Sister Joan Marie Van Beek’s recent letter: “Mary Edmund, in Bloomer, where we were stationed together, you taught me so much about being a good principal. I remember how you’d sit with us teachers after school and listen to our woes and stories – give us announcements and just really let us know how much you cared for us. Thank you! And Mary Edmund, I loved how you would help us with students who were having behavior problems. You’d set a day that we could sit down with you and the kid in trouble. We’d just talk and say what worried us, and listen to the kid. You were so supportive. Such a good way to discipline – no hint of punishment. Just letting the kid know we really cared. So effective. Thank you!”

Sister Mary Edmund Burki is survived by her brother Joseph G. Burki, nieces, nephews, other relatives, friends and the SSND Community. She was preceded in death by her parents Edmund and Anna, her brother Edmund and her sisters-in-law Ruth and Mary Ann.

Last Saturday, on the day she died, we heard these words from God through the prophet Jeremiah . . . “I will turn their mourning into joy; I will console and gladden them after their sorrows.” This message, in a way, could be from Sister Mary Edmund as well . . . because . . . Easter is close at hand. May it remind us that life ends not in mourning, but in joy, not in sadness, but in laughter, not in goodbye forever, but in “hello again.”

Sister Mary Edmund, in you we have found a faithful friend, a sturdy shelter, a priceless treasure. You will be truly missed by all of us, but we believe your smiles, your infinite “Thank yous” and “God bless yous” – your complete dedication to God’s will are all special gifts that will live in our hearts forever.

Indeed, we will thank God with each remembrance of you.

*By Sister Lawrence Marie Brauer, SSND*