

In Loving Memory

Sister Mary Leona Wieck, SSND



Birth
May 2, 1941

Baptism
May 18, 1941

Profession
July 30, 1962

Death
August 25, 2014

Burial
Sancta Maria
in Ripa Cemetery
St. Louis, Missouri

*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

The ninth of eleven children was born to Leona [Stock] and Joseph Wieck on May 2, 1941, in St. Louis, Mo. She was baptized on May 18 at Blessed Sacrament Church and given the name Barbara Ann. Her seven sisters and three brothers included our deceased Sister Kathleen Marie. The children grew up in a deeply faith-filled family, which supported them during the challenges of their lives.

When Barbara was 5 years old, the family moved to Indianapolis, Ind. She attended St. Joan of Arc School for her first and second grades. With a move back to St. Louis, she completed her grade school education at St. Ann in Normandy, Mo. She attended Incarnate Word Academy in St. Louis for her high school education.

During a retreat in her sophomore year, she heard a talk on vocations and realized that she was being called to religious life. Her older sister, Sister Kathleen Marie, and three aunts, Sister Theoda Wieck, Sister Mary Magdalen Wieck and Sister Mary Christopher Stock were School Sisters of Notre Dame.

Barbara entered the candidature at Sancta Maria in Ripa on August 25, 1960. She was received into the novitiate on July 29, 1961, and given the name Mary Leona in honor of her mother. Profession of first vows was on July 30, 1962, and final vows on July 30, 1967.

Following profession, Sister Leona assisted in the aspiranture [formation program for high school aged girls who wanted to become sisters] taking care of the housekeeping needs of the aspirants until the aspiranture closed in 1969. She was refectorian [dining hall coordinator] in the motherhouse for one year and then assigned to assist in the kitchen. From 1976 to 1979, she was in charge of the motherhouse kitchen.

In 1979, she was missioned to Tierra de Sol in Sunland, Calif. where she cooked, drove and helped in the school for students who were mentally disabled. In January 1980, Sister Leona suffered a severe broken ankle and returned to St. Louis for rehab. After the ankle healed, she returned to Sunland until December 1983. Coming back to the St. Louis, she was on the staff at Guardian Angel Day Care for six months. Then she returned to Sancta Maria in Ripa as cook in Caroline Conference and Retreat Center and training housekeepers for the motherhouse.

Sister Leona was missioned for three years to St. Vincent's Home in Philadelphia, Penn. in 1992. It was home to children who had been placed there because they had been abused. It was staffed by SSNDs of the former Baltimore province. As a child care worker, Sister Leona cared for children, ages 2 to 6 years old, giving them the love and attention they needed.

Returning to Missouri, she served for two years as cook for Visitation Interparish School in Vienna, Mo. She was then missioned to Villa Gesu SSND retirement residence in Spanish Lake, Mo. and served there until

continued

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it closed in 1999. She was in charge of food service at St. John Neumann School and the consolidated Christ Light of the Nations School in St. Louis until 2009. Following a sabbatical, Sister Leona served as a driver for The Sarah Community in Bridgeton, Mo. until her health necessitated a move to Veronica House assisted living in April 2011. Later, she was transferred to the Anna House skilled nursing.

Sister Leona struggled with breathing complications during the past several years. On the morning of August 25, 2014 God called her home unexpectedly. On this day, 54 years earlier, she entered SSND as a candidate.

A wake/vigil was held at Anna House and Theresa Center on August 29, 2014. The Mass of Christian Burial was celebrated the following morning with Rev. Thomas Haley presiding. Burial was in the Ripa cemetery.

Sister Leona is survived by four sisters: Kay (Tom) Murphy, Mary (John) Striebel and Connie Sorkin of St. Louis and Jeanne Atkins of Carmel, Ind. She was preceded in death by her parents; her brothers: Tom, Jim and Jack; her sisters: Sister Kathleen Marie, SSND; Joan Pallme and Claire Simon. Many relatives, friends, classmates and SSNDs attended the funeral services

Sister Leona is remembered as a generous and kind person who was willing to help wherever she could. Family and friends recalled her contagious laughter, which lightened difficult experiences and lifted the spirits of all who came in contact with her. She was an excellent baker, willing to share the product of her hands with others. A gentle, loving person, her life as a "Martha" in the community brought joy to many of her sister companions, students, guests, etc. She also witnessed to the "Mary" in her life by her strong faith in God, her courage in suffering and her acceptance of others. She was a living witness to God's love for each person. May she now breathe freely in her new life with her God, her family and friends who have gone before her into eternal life!

By Sister Carol Marie Wildt, SSND