



Birth
March 24, 1928

Baptism
April 1, 1928

Profession
July 31, 1947

Death
November 13, 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 Maura Pawelski, SSND

Sister Mary Maura was born in Stevens Point, Wis. on March 24, 1928, to Emil and Catherine (Doyle) Pawelski, she was named Catherine and baptized on April 1, 1928 at St. Stephen Church in Stevens Point. The first child and the only girl, she had six brothers. Because she shared her mother's name, to avoid confusion, the family always called her Kathleen. Her memories of childhood were happy ones. For 11 years, the family consisted of Kathleen, two brothers and their parents. She said they spent their childhood days "under the loving guidance of Catholic parents who made our Faith the very center of our lives." Twin boys and another brother were added to the family. Kathleen assumed responsibility for helping to care for her three little brothers. After eighth grade, she entered the Juniorate at Longwood in Chicago. It was while a student here, that her sixth brother was born. In 1944, she entered the Candidature in Milwaukee. At reception, she was given the name Maura, an Irish form of Mary – which pleased both parents, especially her mother. She professed her first vows on July 31, 1947. Sister Mary Maura received a Bachelor of Arts in English from Mount Mary College, Milwaukee in 1962.

Sister Mary Maura ministered for 22 years as a teacher of elementary and secondary students. She taught at St. Michael, Chicago; Christ King, Wauwatosa, Wis.; Sacred Heart, Grosse Ile, Mich.; Santa Maria Incoronata, Chicago; St. Mary, Elm Grove, Wis.; Messmer High School, Milwaukee; Notre Dame High School, Milwaukee; St. Mary, Burlington, Wis.; and St. Joan Antida High School, Milwaukee. Additionally, she was involved with community service and volunteer ministries. Sister Mary Maura retired in 1992 to Notre Dame of Elm Grove where she ministered through her prayer and presence.

Among the special treasures kept by Sister Maura was a small photo of herself. Wearing a soft veil and dark V-necked jacket she is standing gracefully poised, with hands gently clasped, next to a large poster on the door. Its message seems to come to us directly from Maura's heart:

*Every human person
is a mystery
That must be learned
slowly
reverently
with care
tenderness
and pain
and is never learned
completely*

Sister Maura left us quietly, peacefully, trusting that she was loved — by her family and community, especially by her dear brother George and Sister Marilyn, who were there for final farewells at Franciscan Woods.

continued

In Loving Memory



Sister Mary Maura Pawelski



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www.ssndcentralpacific.org



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

TRANSFORMING THE WORLD
THROUGH EDUCATION

There are many things we would like to know and share about her life, but there are only a few things we have learned about the mystery Maura spoke of in that quotation.

The rest of the years that followed might be summed up by one of Maura's favorite saying: "Life is about relationships." In school, in community, in times of illness — there were relationships, calling forth her capacity to teach and suffer and learn. Certainly her family — especially her brothers — loved her intensely. The brothers treasured their relationship with their sister and her loving gratitude to them for their care and support — phone calls, gifts, and inspiration which enriched her life year after year.

During her years in Racine, where she went initially to care for her mother, she was moved by her brother Richard's involvement in many areas of the Civil Rights Movement, and in his spirit she did whatever she could as "an advocate for the poor and illiterate."

This spirit of compassion marked her years as a patient at Franciscan Woods. While her mornings were always her sacred prayer time, she found opportunities to show her compassion and concern for others there, especially the families of seriously ill patients. She shared her daily newspaper with her neighbors in her wing, spoke about God and prayed with many. Her ministry was simple, direct and heartfelt.

Her bright mind absorbed the news about the Congregation, the world, the church — and so she prayed the news, the SSND General Chapter — and even the pictorial directory. She was proud of her flowing penmanship and gift of letter-writing. She told her stories with wit and a spark of mischief! She sometimes was a blend of English teacher and admonitrix. In a way she was always "in control" of her space and time — and when the moment came for a visitor to leave, she would reach for a card — a laminated enlargement of the Prayer of St. Francis and ask, "Will you pray this with me?" Yes, Maura, we gladly pray with you today as we thank God for the mystery of the life you shared so lovingly, so faithfully.

*Oh, Divine Master, grant that I may not so much seek
To be consoled, as to console;
To be understood, as to understand;
To be loved, as to love.
For it is in giving that we receive
It is pardoning that we are pardoned,
And it is in dying that we are born to Eternal Life.
Amen.*

Sister Mary Maura died on November 13, 2013 at the Franciscan Woods Health Care, Brookfield, Wisconsin. She was 85 and is survived by her brother, George Pawelski, other relatives, friends and the SSND Community.

By Sister Mary Luke Baldwin, SSND