

In Loving Memory

Sister Mary Ronald Pable, SSND



Birth
June 15, 1917

Baptism
June 17, 1917

Profession
August 3, 1937

Death
April 5, 2012

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

It is interesting how God plants vocations in a variety of gardens. Oshkosh, Wisconsin can boast of being a very fruitful locale – women and men religious grew up with Lake Winnebago in the background. Among them was Sister Mary Ronald Pable. Baptized Margaret Mary when she was only two days old, Sister Mary Ronald was the second child of eight, the oldest daughter of six girls.

Margaret attended St. Vincent, the parish school and the School Sisters of Notre Dame were her teachers. Beginning in the sixth grade, she and a friend helped the sisters with church work after school and during vacation. She took these occasions to talk to the sisters about her future. When she asked her father and mother for permission to enter the convent, they willingly consented, adding that they if each of their children desired to enter religious life, they would not hesitate to say yes. Some years later they were able to say yes again when Sister Virgene asked to enter the School Sisters of Notre Dame.

Sister Mary Ronald writes in her autobiography about being quarantined with her two brothers and two of her sisters for being exposed to scarlet fever. Fortunately they were not ill and the five siblings enjoyed two extra months of vacation from school – which was probably not a vacation for their mother! Interestingly, because of the construction of a new St. Vincent School, the parish did not have a confirmation class in 1930. Margaret entered the SSND candidature in 1932, before receiving the sacrament. She and four other candidates had the opportunity to confirm their faith with 12 orphans at Elm Grove, the very same place where she finished her religious life and is now laid to rest.

As a candidate, her long career as a primary grade teacher began at Holy Trinity Parish, Milwaukee. Perhaps her experience with little brothers and sisters prepared her for this ministry with little ones. Margaret was received into the congregation and given the name Mary Ronald on July 28, 1936 and on August 3, 1937, she professed her first vows.

For 41 years Sister Mary Ronald was sent to teach first, second or third graders in a variety of places:

1937: Holy Trinity, Milwaukee, Wis.

1944: Orphanage, Green Bay, Wis.

1946: St. Peter, Fort Wayne, Ind.

1954: Sacred Heart, Laurium, Mich.

1955: St. Gabriel, Prairie du Chien, Wis.

1958: Our Lady of Lourdes, Marinette, Wis.

1963: St. John de La Salle, Chicago, Ill.

1964: Holy Name, Sheboygan, Wis.

continued

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

TRANSFORMING THE WORLD
THROUGH EDUCATION

1967: St. Mary, Greenville, Wis.

1972: Holy Cross, Mount Calvary, Wis.

1974: Sacred Heart, Appleton, Wis.

In 1978 she spent a year of community service at Our Lady of Mount Carmel Convent, Mount Calvary, Wis. and the next year at Visitation Convent in Elm Grove, Wis.

In 1980 Sister Mary Ronald went back to the class room and coordination of the Learning and Media Center at St. Peter's in Beaver Dam, Wis. She returned to Mount Calvary in 1988 and there, for one more year, she taught reading in the primary grades, able to claim 50 years in the ministry of teaching before retiring in 1989. In 2008, Sister moved to Notre Dame of Elm Grove.

Sister Mary Ronald would tell about the Christmas pageant put on by the primary children in her years at Beaver Dam. "Look! The star is moving. We must follow it," the wise men said. Consequently, a yellow star atop a broomstick began to move across the back of the stage. Unseen behind the set up screens was the prime mover, Sister Mary Ronald. The star did what it was supposed to do – it led to Jesus.

Mother Theresa said, "Follow the star. It will surely lead you to Jesus." Sister Mary Ronald loved leading children to Jesus. She especially delighted in preparing classes for first Communion. Thus, it is significant that she died on Holy Thursday. It's easy to imagine her beautiful smile when she realized this special connection.

A visitation and wake service were celebrated April 11, 2012, followed by a Mass of Christian Burial at Holy Family Chapel, Notre Dame of Elm Grove. Sister Mary Ronald is survived by her sisters, Sister Mary Virgene Pable, SSND, Gertrude Pable, Dolores Pable, Dorothy Pable and Frances Miller, nieces, nephews, other relatives, friends and the SSND Community.

Pray for us, Sister, that we will all share eternal Easter joy someday.

By Sister Joan Emily Kaul, SSND