



**Birth**  
November 17, 1942

**Baptism**  
December 6, 1942

**Profession**  
July 31, 1963

**Death**  
December 4, 2014

**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 Sandra Peterson, SSND

**B**orn in Green Bay, Wis. on November 17, 1942, to Edwin and Mary Alice (Green) Peterson, she was baptized Mary Jane at St. Nicholas Church in Freedom, Wis. She was the second oldest of 11 children. The family lived just two blocks from St. Nicholas School, where the children received their elementary education.

The School Sisters of Notre Dame staffed the school and were a great inspiration to Mary Jane. In eighth grade, she told her teacher and parents about her desire to become a sister. They were supportive and at the age of 14, Mary Jane left home for the SSND aspiranture at St. Mary's Academy in Prairie du Chien, Wis., where she studied for two years. Mary Jane completed her high school studies at Caroline Academy in Mequon, Wis., where the aspiranture had moved.

At her reception as a novice, in 1962, she was given the religious name Mary Sandra. Her first vows were professed on July 31, 1963. Sister Sandra earned a bachelor's degree with a major in social studies and a minor in English from Mount Mary College, Milwaukee, in 1970 and a master's degree in education from Cardinal Stritch College, Milwaukee, in 1986.

Sister Sandra served as an elementary educator for 17 years. Her teaching missions were in Wisconsin at SS. Peter and Paul, Wisconsin Rapids; Holy Angels, West Bend; St. Stanislaus, Berlin; and St. Vincent de Paul, Oshkosh. In 1983, her ministry changed when she shifted to serving as a coordinator of religious education and pastoral associate. She served for 25 years in the Wisconsin parishes of St. Peter, Oconto; St. Joseph, Sturgeon Bay; St. Mary, Bear Creek; and St. Rose, Kaukana.

From 2008-2011, she was her mother's caregiver in the family home. After the death of her mother, Sister Sandra volunteered in pastoral ministry at St. Nicholas Parish in Freedom, where she found great joy in giving back to the parish where she was baptized and educated. Most recently she was a pastoral assistant at St. Nicholas, where she also taught second grade faith formation. Sister Sandra also started many committees including the Prayer Garden at Bear Creek and the Prayer Shawl and Widow's Support Group at St. Nicholas.

*Sister Sandra wrote the following Sunday reflection in 2008. It is based upon verses from Matthew's Gospel and beautifully echoes how she responded to God's call in her own life.*

#### The Value of Being Valued

*Are not two sparrows sold for a small coin? Yet not one of them falls to the ground without your Father's knowledge. Even all the hairs of your head are counted. So do not be afraid; you are worth more than many sparrows."*

– Matthew 10:29-31

*continued*

# In Loving Memory



*Sister Sandra Peterson*



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

TRANSFORMING THE WORLD  
THROUGH EDUCATION

A young woman from our parish graduated from Clintonville High School this spring, not only as valedictorian, but also as an accomplished musician. In her graduation speech, Rebecca spoke about the impact her grandfather had on her when she was a first grader and won an award for her piano recital. She remembered him scooping her up in his arms and telling her, “You’re the greatest!” Those affirming words by a significant person blessed Rebecca through the years.

The power of affirming words! I’ve often wondered if Mary made a mantra of the words spoken to her by the Angel Gabriel. – “Full of grace.” – “The Lord is with you.” – “You have found favor with God.”

Was Jesus sustained through all his trials by the words his Father spoke? – “You are my beloved son in whom my favor rests.”

As we go through our journey on earth there seem to be plenty of negative messages, but if, deep down, we know we are valued by someone significant, we can feel peace and joy in our hearts and have the courage to do our best. As Christians, we are so very valued by God. Who could be more significant? If we ever feel tempted to doubt that we are valued, all we need to do is pick up the Scriptures where there are countless expressions and images of how much God loves and values us. God claims us as his very children. We are worth more than many sparrows. Yes, indeed!

*June 22, 2008 – by Sister Sandra Peterson, SSND*

Sister Sandra passed away peacefully surrounded by her loving family on Thursday, December 4, 2014. The Mass of Resurrection was held at noon on December 11, 2014, at St. Nicholas Catholic Church in Freedom, Wis., with Fr. Walter Stump celebrating and Fr. Don Everts and Fr. Robert Karuhn concelebrating. Her interment was at the Notre Dame of Elm Grove Cemetery in Elm Grove, Wis.

Sister Sandra is survived by her sisters: Pat (Loren) Wiandt, Honey (Terry) Garvey, Lois (Pat) Grady, Sandy (Jim) Verhoeven; her brothers: Bob “R.L.” (Mary), Roy, Jerry and Joe (Sherry) Peterson; a special sister-in-law, Karol Peterson; nieces and nephews; countless other family members and friends; and her School Sisters of Notre Dame, especially Sisters Mary Ellen Doherty and Mary Lauretta Rose Koscielniak. She was preceded in death by her parents, Edwin and Alice; her brothers, Roger and Jim “Morgan” Peterson, and a nephew, Joe Grady.

She was a wonderful woman and will be deeply missed. Sister Sandra shared so generously with others — acceptance, encouragement, understanding, patience, guidance, love, support and a great sense of humor. We love you Sister Sandra!

*This remembrance is compiled from SSND archival information  
and the obituary prepared by Sister Sandra’s family.*