

2015 Jubilee



First Profession
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JUBILEE WISDOM

*"The greatest blessing
of my life has been
a grateful heart for
all of God's love
and gifts ..."*

- Mary Elsa Metternich
SSND

Mary Elsa Metternich, SSND

80 Years

Sister Mary Elsa's early years as a Catholic grade school teacher took her to Blue Island, Illinois; Milwaukee, Wisconsin; and the Michigan towns of Grand Rapids and Harbor Springs. She followed her call to Guam in 1956, beginning a decade of teaching and administration in the communities of Yona and Agat. She returned to the classroom from 1966-1971 in the Wisconsin cities of Prairie du Chien and Sheboygan. Returning to missionary service once more, she taught in Barrigada, Guam and in the western Pacific Caroline-Marshall Islands, concluding her overseas ministries in 1988. Returning to Milwaukee, she undertook various roles in congregational and community service. She retired to Notre Dame of Elm Grove in 2008; since 2011, Sister Mary Elsa has resided at Our Lady of the Angels nursing home in Greenfield, Wisconsin, where she anticipates celebrating her 100th birthday late this year. She received a bachelor's in social science from Mount Mary College in Milwaukee and a master's in education from Marquette University, also in Milwaukee.

A blessing of these years I want to share is ...

The greatest blessing of my life has been a grateful heart for all of God's love and gifts from the first day of my life as a School Sister of Notre Dame.

The words of wisdom I would like to share ...

Throughout my 80 years, I have learned that by being open to and responding to the calls of my community leaders, wherever they took me, I was doing the will of God.

What was an especially meaningful time in your ministry?

Every ministry, in many places in the U.S. or Guam, and the outer Islands of Guam, taught me the beauty of God in my life and the life of the people whom I served.

What drew you to the School Sisters of Notre Dame?

My parents, my siblings and I were all taught by the School Sisters of Notre Dame, and I always thought I would like to be a Sister. But when I was ready to enter a religious community, my Reverend Cousin told my mother about the Franciscans and urged her to lead me in that direction, because they were allowed to visit their families, unlike the Notre Dames, who were semi-cloistered at the time. After talking to my Dad, my parents said, "No, we know and love the SSNDs," and encouraged my vocation in the direction of my heart.



School Sisters
of Notre Dame
Central Pacific Province