



School Sisters of Notre Dame
Central Pacific Province

Transforming the world through education

2017 Jubilee

Celebrating 60 years

First Profession—7/17/1957

Formerly Sister Mary Johnita

Sister Elizabeth Willems, SSND

Sister Elizabeth followed her first profession in 1957 with a decade of teaching Catholic grade school across Minnesota and at St. Donatus in the Diocese of Dubuque, Iowa. In 1968, she began teaching high school, including a four year assignment in Wabasha, Minnesota, followed by a six-year assignment at Grace High School in Fridley, Minnesota. Turning to a new ministry in 1976, Sister Elizabeth accepted a role as campus minister at North Dakota State University in Fargo, which she held through 1979 when she undertook several more years of studies in Chicago and Milwaukee. Beginning in 1985, she served as a professor for 22 years at Notre Dame Seminary in New Orleans. She concluded her ministry in education at Loyola University in New Orleans, serving as professor of religious studies from 2007 through 2013. She remains in New Orleans, volunteering full-time in numerous capacities across the community. She holds a bachelor's in home economics with a minor in science from Mount Mary College. Her advanced degrees include a masters' in religious studies, theology and psychology. At age 49, Sister Elizabeth earned a doctor of philosophy degree in moral theology and psychology from Marquette University in Milwaukee.



A memory I have to share...

Among my many memories are those in ministry. I have memories of teaching primary and middle school classes in Minnesota and Iowa. My move to college level teaching took me to North Dakota, and from there to graduate study in Chicago and Milwaukee. This opened the door to teaching at Notre Dame Seminary in New Orleans for 22 years. Later, I taught for seven years at Loyola University in New Orleans. At present, I teach senior citizens and serve on the RCIA team in my parish. Educating the whole person is what we, as SSNDs, try to do, and what I attempted to do through teaching. SSND provided me the motivation and the opportunity to study and serve. Some SSNDs helped me learn the art of teaching and value it. The art is, after all, learning about people and how they think. I came to realize how closely learning is related to personal and social development. Society changes as people change through what they learn. Jesus becomes known through learning about Him and coming to love Him.

Join us in celebrating our Jubilarian sisters.
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