

2025 Jubilee

SISTER MARY ELISE ZETTEL

First Profession



July 12, 1955

Celebrating 70 years



Teacher, organist, superintendent, therapist, volunteer - **Sister Mary Elise Zettel** has served in many varied ministry roles over her years as a School Sister of Notre Dame (SSND). Like many SSND, she began as a teacher. She taught at most every level, starting at primary and working up through elementary and then junior high for schools in Sheboygan, Greenville, Neillsville and Darlington, Wisconsin. In 1978, she became an educational consultant for the Diocese of Superior in Superior, Wisconsin, which then led to her role as superintendent for the diocese from 1980-1983. From there,

she was then elected to a four-year term as councilor in the former Milwaukee Province. In 1989, she earned a master's degree in social work from the University of Wisconsin, Milwaukee, adding to her bachelor's degree in biology from Mount Mary College (now University) and a master's of science from the University of Wisconsin, Madison. With her social work degree, she undertook a series of new ministry opportunities as a family therapist in Green Bay until 1999. From 1999-2005, Sister Mary Elise was a community leader for sisters at Notre Dame of Elm Grove in Elm Grove, Wisconsin. Following a period of sabbatical, she entered into a series of volunteer ministries, including serving as a budget counselor and home buying counselor for clients of the Dominican Center for Women in Milwaukee. From 2011-2013, she served as a community leader at Greenfield's Our Lady of the Angels retirement center. Since then, Sister Mary Elise shared her time and gifts in various volunteer ministries. She now resides in prayer, presence and service at Trinity Woods in Milwaukee. Of her many years ministering she says, "I loved helping people to have a better life."

What initially drew you to the School Sisters of Notre Dame or how did you know you wanted to be a SSND?

I grew up with them as my teachers and I admired the joy I saw among them. That spirit seemed to be the kind of life I wanted to live.

What advice or words of wisdom would you want to impart to others?

God is Love and all who abide in Love abide in God

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School Sisters of Notre Dame
Central Pacific Province