



In Loving Memory

Sister Irene Marie Schmitz

The oldest of six children was born to Irene (Schroeder) and Herman Schmitz on June 16, 1930 on her father's farm near Linn, Missouri. Two days later, she was baptized at St. George Church in Linn and named Dorothy Mary Agnes. Four brothers and one sister completed the family.

Dorothy attended St. George Grade School where she was taught by the School Sisters of Notre Dame. She was inspired by her second grade teacher, S. Joannette Ulrich. However, it was her seventh and eighth grade teacher, S. Theophila Bechtold, who suggested that she enter the aspiranture at Ripa after completing one year at Linn Public High School. Dorothy raised the following objections: her parents couldn't pay for it, she was needed at home and she might not like it. S. Theophila encouraged her by saying that she would help pay the expenses and that Dorothy could come home if she did not like it. She entered the aspiranture in 1946 and completed her high school education at Notre Dame High School, St. Louis. Still uncertain of her call to religious life, she prayed and debated about what to do. She said that, "I finally let the Lord have his way."

Dorothy entered the candidature on August 30, 1949. Several days later, she was sent to teach 60 first graders at St. Bernadette School, St. Louis. She was transferred in October and sent to Sacred Heart, Eureka, Missouri to teach 18 first and second graders. Due to illness and uncertainty about her vocation, she spent the second year of candidature teaching first and second grade at Sacred Heart, Morrilton, Arkansas. Realizing that she would be happy only when she gave herself completely to God, she entered the novitiate on July 31, 1951 and received the name, Irene Marie. Profession of first vows was on August 1, 1952 and final vows on August 1, 1958.

Following profession, S. Irene Marie taught elementary children at St. Francis de Sales, St. Louis for 15 years; Our Lady Queen of Peace, House Springs, Missouri for 12 years and St. Joseph, Freeburg, Missouri for two years. She received a bachelor's degree in theology in 1960 from the former Notre Dame College, St. Louis.

In 1981, she began her ministry at Immaculate Conception, Loose Creek, Missouri. She taught there until 2014, and continued to volunteer at the school and in the parish until her assignment to Veronica House, Bridgeton, Missouri in June 2017. In late July, she was hospitalized. Due to complications, she was placed on hospice and was transferred to Elizabeth House at The Sarah Community. S. Anita Marie Lischwe and Crossroads Hospice were with her as she peacefully returned her life to God at 12:35 a.m. on August 10, 2017.

A wake/vigil was held at The Sarah Community and Theresa Center on August 13. The Mass of Christian Burial was celebrated the following morning with Rev. Louis Nelen, former pastor from Linn, Missouri, presiding. Burial was in the Ripa cemetery. Her sister, two brothers and

Birth
June 16, 1930

Baptism
June 18, 1930

Profession
August 1, 1952

Death
August 10, 2017

Burial
Sancta Maria in Ripa
Cemetery
St. Louis, MO

*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

continued

In Loving Memory



Sister Irene Marie Schmitz



extended family members, parishioners and friends from Linn, classmates and sisters celebrated her life.

She is survived by one sister, Jean Niewald of Linn, Missouri; and two brothers: Jerry (Mary Alice) of Millstadt, Illinois and James (Jeannine) Schmitz of Lake St. Louis. She was preceded in death by her parents and two brothers: Stanley and Jack.

S. Irene Marie prepared hundreds of children to receive the sacraments of reconciliation and Holy Eucharist. Dedicated to Catholic education, she brought Christian values to those she encountered. Organized, creative, and generous with her time, S. Irene Marie promoted the development of each child she met in the classroom. She shared with other faculty members from her wealth of experience with primary children and was a mentor to principals and teachers. Her fun-loving, kind, gentle and friendly manner made her an excellent community member.

Because she was ministering in Loose Creek, she was also able to help care for her parents the last five years of their lives. They died seven months apart in 1991. This was a great consolation to S. Irene Marie and to her family who deeply loved her.

A dedicated, cheerful, prayerful person, S. Irene Marie was a gift to the parish and community during her many years of ministry at Loose Creek. As she receives the reward that God promised to those who teach the little ones, may she rejoice in beholding her God face to face.

By Sister Carol Marie Wildt, SSND

To make a memorial gift,
please visit our secure
online donation page
www.ssndcentralpacific.org/donate



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

TRANSFORMING THE WORLD
THROUGH EDUCATION