



In Loving Memory

Sister M. Claudette Hudalla

Sister Claudette Hudalla, SSND, 93, died on Thursday, October 3, 2019, in Notre Dame Health Care, Our Lady of Good Counsel, Mankato, Minnesota. The oldest of seven children, Sister Claudette was born on March 24, 1926, in St. Paul, Minnesota, to Leo and Dorothy (Cavegn) Hudalla. Three weeks later, she was baptized Dolores Margaret at St. Casimir Church. In the fall of 1931, she started first grade at St. Casimir School and completed grades one through three. As a fourth grader, she transferred to Sacred Heart School, where she was taught by the School Sisters of Notre Dame. She wrote, “Our life was centered around our parish, Sacred Heart, where the SSND teachers and the OFM Capuchins did their best to mold us. Car doors flung open on the old Pontiac each Sunday as Dad headed for the ushers’ table, two boys to the sacristy, two girls to the choir, and the young siblings joined Mom in the pew . . . Needless to say, we were all influenced by the SSND teachers who dominated our daily lives. There was an esprit de corps among them, which spoke of genuine happiness.”

Birth
March 24, 1926

Baptism
April 11, 1926

Profession
July 19, 1949

Death
October 3, 2019

Burial
Our Lady of Good Counsel
Cemetery

*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

After eighth grade graduation in 1939, financial circumstances caused Dolores to attend Johnson High School in St. Paul for two years. As a junior and senior, she attended St. Agnes High School, earning money for tuition and streetcar fares through a variety of jobs including sales clerk, typing for a social worker, waitress work at hotel banquets and babysitting. After graduating from high school in 1943, she worked as a bond statistician’s secretary at Paine Webber. Her vocation story continued, “Every Friday night found me at choir practice, sharing my ‘secrets’ and trying to make a final life choice. Prefecting the Sodality, dating often, working and liking work, filled my days. But always in the back of my mind, was a dream I had in the 8th grade to become an SSND. For four years, I fought off this vocation.” At the suggestion of one of her grade school teachers, she visited Our Lady of Good Counsel in Mankato, Minnesota, during Reception and Profession days in the summer of 1946, and knew this was the place for her. She became an SSND candidate that fall and later wrote, “Never from that moment have I doubted my vocation.”

Dolores was received into the novitiate in 1948 and given the name Sister Claudette. Following first profession of vows in 1949, she began her educational ministry as an intermediate and junior high teacher, first at St. Andrew, St. Paul, Minnesota (1949-50), then at SS. Cyril & Methodius, Minneapolis, Minnesota (1950-52); Immaculate Conception, Gilbertville, Iowa (1952-56); and finally at St. Peter, Hokah, Minnesota (1956-57). In 1957, her ministry as a high school teacher began with an appointment to Good Counsel Academy, Mankato, Minnesota, where she taught English, business courses and physical education in addition to coaching speech and debate teams, as well as assisting with drama productions. In 1962, she moved to Trinity High School in Dickinson, North Dakota. A biographical sketch of Sister Claudette published when she was inducted into the North Dakota Speech and Theater Association Hall of Fame stated: “Sister Claudette’s years at Trinity were especially memorable because she was a teacher there when the school first opened. She instituted Trinity’s very successful speech and debate program, as well as the high school’s participation in student congress. The forensics season lasted from September to April with events scheduled almost every weekend. Despite this

continued

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Hudalla*



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heavy schedule she also found time to direct the school's drama program." She continued her English, forensics and drama work at Loyola High School, Mankato, Minnesota, from 1970 through 1976, and again, from 1978 through 1981. She also taught high school classes at St. Mary, New England, North Dakota (1976-78 and 1983-84); Cretin, St. Paul, Minnesota (1981-82); Totino-Grace, Fridley, Minnesota (1985-87); and Holy Trinity, Winsted, Minnesota (1996-98). She earned a BA in secretarial science from Mount Mary in 1958, and an MA in speech and drama from Marquette University in 1968.

Sister Claudette described her next field of ministry: "[In 1987] my innovative and creative teaching agenda underwent yet another metamorphosis as I moved from high school English, drama, public speaking and business courses to English as a Second Language in the Society of the Divine Word (SVD) College for International Seminarians in Epworth, Iowa. Here growth in a multicultural perspective is fostered through monthly International Nights." She continued her own education as well, taking classes and workshops to better assist speakers whose first language is not English.

After six years in Epworth, Sister Claudette answered another educational call, a call to teach English to high school students at Patrona Hungariae Gimnázium in Budapest, Hungary. She taught sophomores through seniors twice a week and substituted on Saturday for a young teacher who was taking college courses. She thoroughly enjoyed her two years in Hungary and took full advantage of the cultural and travel opportunities offered there.

Sister Claudette returned from Hungary in 1995 and taught one year in the Good Counsel Learning Center, Mankato, Minnesota, followed by two years at Holy Trinity, in Winsted, Minnesota. In 1998, she continued her ESL ministry as a fully certified ESL teacher. She worked in the Roseville Community Center, the Jewish Community Center in Roseville, and at Jewish Family Services in St. Paul, all in Minnesota. Seeing the need to prepare students for employment as quickly as possible, she offered a class called Functional Work English. She described the class, "We dramatize work experiences such as introductions, visiting the supply room and requesting materials, calling in sick, and coming in late." She volunteered at the East Side Learning Center in St. Paul, Minnesota, from 2006 until she came to Our Lady of Good Counsel, Mankato, Minnesota, in 2013.

Sister Claudette valued her call to religious life and celebrated her 70th Jubilee of religious profession this year.

The funeral liturgy, with Father Eugene Stenzel as presider, was held October 8, 2019, in Our Lady of Good Counsel Chapel, preceded by a prayer service of remembrance. Burial of her cremains followed in the Good Counsel Cemetery. She is survived by one sister, Marlene Yarusso, nieces and nephews, and her sisters in community, the School Sisters of Notre Dame and associates. She was preceded in death by her parents, Leo and Dorothy (Cavegn) Hudalla, her sisters, Sister LaVerne, OSB, and Dorothy Barrett, and her brothers, Leo, Robert and Gene.

By Sister Mary Kay Ash, SSND