



Birth  
January 25, 1925

Baptism  
February 1, 1925

Profession  
July 22, 1945

Death  
January 20, 2020

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

## *In Loving Memory*

### Sister M. Francis Clare Schares

Just five days short of her 95th birthday, Sister M. Francis Clare Schares, SSND, 94, died on Monday, January 20, 2020, in Notre Dame Health Care, Our Lady of Good Counsel, Mankato, Minnesota. The sixth child of nine, she was born on the family farm about three miles from Gilbertville, Iowa. She was baptized at Immaculate Conception Church in Gilbertville, and given the name, Alma Rose.

Alma Rose started school at Immaculate Conception in 1930. Her First Communion and Confirmation days remained strong in her memory, as did other aspects of grade school life. She wrote in her autobiography, "During my eight years of grade school, I grew and flourished under the tender guidance and instructions of the Notre Dame Sisters. I imagine that I was just about as studious and as mischievous as any of my classmates, for I recall many a call for an explanation of the inconsistency of a report card with all A's except in conduct. During my sixth year at school, our class inaugurated a Little Flower Library Club, which in no time at all, developed in me a unique and unquenchable passion for reading. Many a time, I attempted to set the table by walking about, dishes in one hand, book in the other."

As an eighth grader, Alma Rose struggled with the idea of entering the aspiranture at Good Counsel Academy in Mankato, Minnesota. With four School Sisters of Notre Dame (SSND) aunts (Sisters Thecla, Margaret and Henrietta Mangrich; and Sister Camilla Schares), she was familiar with SSND life. Her mother became ill and died when Alma Rose was in the eighth grade, and this compounded her struggle. After her mother's death, she decided "with a new determination to forget forever, that I had ever thought of becoming a sister." However, during the summer, even though she threw away pamphlets that came from Good Counsel, her attitude shifted. After a home visit from her three Mangrich aunts, she decided to become an SSND aspirant. In the fall of 1938, she left home for Good Counsel Academy, Mankato, Minnesota.

Following four happy years in the aspiranture, Alma Rose became an SSND candidate in August 1942. As a second year candidate, she taught second grade at St. Agnes School, St. Paul, Minnesota. On July 21, 1944, her day of reception into the novitiate, she was given the name Sister Francis Clare. After profession of vows in 1945, Sister Francis Clare taught primary grades at St. Felix, Wabasha, Minnesota, for three years. From 1948 through 1951, she filled in at St. Matthew, St. Agnes and Sacred Heart, St. Paul, Minnesota, while also attending Diocesan Teachers College and the College of St. Catherine, St. Paul, Minnesota. She spent the next 20 years (1951-71) as a junior or senior high teacher at St. Anthony, Lismore, Minnesota; Blessed Sacrament and Columbus, Waterloo, Iowa; St. Gertrude, Raleigh, North Dakota; St. Michael, Madison, Minnesota; and Loyola High School, Mankato, Minnesota. She earned a BA in English and history from the College of St. Catherine, St. Paul, Minnesota, in 1951, and an MA in guidance and counseling from Loras College, Dubuque, Iowa, in 1964.

*continued*

# In Loving Memory



*Sister M. Francis Clare  
Schares*



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It was during her later years of teaching that Sister Francis Clare became aware of the charismatic renewal movement. She read, “*The Cross and the Switchblade*,” by Dave Wilkerson, and later commented, “I became furious because God was more real to Nicky Cruz, a gangster that had broken 15 of the 10 commandments, than to me, a good nun for the past 25 years.” Beginning in 1971, she spent three years in charismatic renewal ministry in programs in Ann Arbor, Michigan, and Convent Station, New Jersey. In 1974, she came to Mankato, Minnesota, working in the Our Lady of Good Counsel in the mornings and spending the afternoons writing her first book, “*Wow, God!*,” which describes in detail her journey into the charismatic renewal movement. She then taught one year at St. Casimir, Wells, and one year at St. Mary, Sleepy Eye, both in Minnesota. From 1978 through 1982, she ministered in the charismatic renewal programs of the Minnesota Diocese of New Ulm.

In 1983, Sister Francis Clare had the opportunity to move to St. Rita, an SSND convent in West Allis, Wisconsin, where she greatly expanded her ministry in charismatic renewal. Using St. Rita as her base, she traveled extensively, both within and outside the United States. She directed charismatic retreats and missions, gave presentations to parishes and other groups, spoke at national and international charismatic gatherings, prayed with individuals and groups, wrote articles and letters of encouragement, and led more than 15 pilgrimages to the Holy Land. She completed three more books, “*Your Move, God*,” “*We, The Bride*,” and “*Glory to Glory*.” Her books were translated into various languages. In August 1997, she addressed the University of Notre Dame, South Bend, Indiana, football team at the invitation of Coach Bob Davie.

Sister Francis Clare resided in West Allis until 2003, when she returned to Our Lady of Good Counsel, Mankato, Minnesota. She continued her charismatic outreach for a few years and then transitioned into retirement at Our Lady of Good Counsel. She brightened others’ days by sharing a joke or story, and was very generous in sharing gifts that she received from family and friends. She prayed often with and for others.

Her Funeral Liturgy, with Father Eugene Stenzel as presider, was held on Monday, January 27, 2020, in Our Lady of Good Counsel Chapel; a 9:00 a.m. prayer service preceded the Liturgy. Burial followed in the Good Counsel Cemetery. She is survived by nieces and nephews and their families; her sisters in community, the School Sisters of Notre Dame and SSND associates. She was preceded in death by her parents, John and Clara (Mangrich) Schares; her sisters, Delores Frost, Adeline Gibbons and Mary Frost; and her brothers, Gene, Ray, Vince, Leo and Alvin.

“Glory” was an important theme in Sister Frances Clare’s life. Her final book contained 95 reflections on various aspects of “glory.” Her Funeral Liturgy theme asks that all people give God glory. May Sister Francis Clare, who dedicated so much of her life to the glory and praise of God, now rejoice forever in the glorious presence of God.

*By Sister Mary Kay Ash, SSND*