

# *In Loving Memory*

## Sister Mary Alice Wald



**Birth**  
June 20, 1925

**Baptism**  
June 21, 1925

**Profession**  
July 22, 1945

**Death**  
January 4, 2024

**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

Sister Mary Alice Wald, 98, died peacefully at Benedictine Living Community, Shakopee, Minnesota, Thursday, January 4, 2024, at 1:13 p.m. Sisters had been praying with her in the days leading up to her death.

On June 20, 1925, Adam and Magdalena Wald of Wishek, North Dakota, welcomed their eighth child, a daughter named Mary Ann, known as Mary. The family would eventually grow to include 14 children. Mary was baptized the day after her birth at St. Anthony Church in Napoleon, North Dakota. The Wald children learned about God at home and said all their prayers in German. In 1932, Mary started first grade in the local public school. As she became older, she helped her mother with housework and her father with field work. After finishing eighth grade in 1940, she cared for the child of one of her married brothers.

In 1942, Mary decided to become a sister. Her older sisters Dorothy and Veronica (known for many years as Sister M. Bertilla) were already with the School Sisters of Notre Dame (SSND) in Mankato. Sister Alice later wrote, "I wasn't sure whether it was going to be the Notre Dame or the Franciscan order, and after praying over it and thinking which I would rather choose, it was always the Franciscan order because I could make more home visits. I also thought that [Our Lady of] Good Counsel, Mankato, Minnesota] was too far from home. But it happened that I chose Notre Dame after all. Sister Bertilla, my sister, had taken vows there. I feel this is where our dear Lord wants me to be."

Mary entered the School Sisters of Notre Dame in August 1942, and spent her first year assisting with housekeeping duties at St. Agnes Convent in St. Paul. She was received into the novitiate in 1944, and given the name Sister Mary Alice. She professed first vows in 1945, and spent the next three years working in food service at Our Lady of Good Counsel, Mankato. During this time, the young home service sister had three recipes published in the 1947 Notre Dame Centenary Cookbook, which were her Pineapple Dessert, Pecan Crispies and Jacks.

In 1948, Sister Alice began a four-year home service ministry at St. Leo Convent, St. Leo, Minnesota. She continued this service at St. Dominic, Northfield (1952-55); St. Stanislaus, Winona (1955-60 and 1966-67); St. Matthew, St. Paul (1960-63); St. Mary, New England, North Dakota, where she assisted with boarders (1963-66 and 1973-75); and Our Lady of Guadalupe, St. Paul, Minnesota (1967-73).

Sister Alice wrote about the next chapter of her life, "In 1967, a new opportunity opened for me as I joined the Project Discovery Program at Guadalupe. It was my first experience in working with Mexican and African American children and adults. It enriched my life." She spent the years 1973 through 1975 in New England, North Dakota, and returned to Our Lady of Guadalupe, St. Paul, Minnesota, in 1975. She continued, "I received another new challenge that of working in pastoral ministry. Sister Colleen Hau came over from St. Matthew and helped me train lay people to be Eucharistic Ministers to the homebound. I also planned days of reflection, inviting various speakers to be part of the day.

*continued*

# In Loving Memory



*Sister Mary Alice Wald*



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It was part of my ministry to plan days for the Anointing of the Sick. This was a most rewarding experience for me.” The 1981 parish history of Our Lady of Guadalupe, Nuestra Senora – Our Very Own, expanded on Sister Alice’s role at Guadalupe, “Sister Alice Wald came to Guadalupe in 1975. She earned a reputation for putting together excellent senior citizen retreats, bringing together both the Spanish and non-Spanish seniors from the local community and surrounding area. These retreats provided our elders wonderful days of prayer, communion and a chance to be with their peers. Sister Alice’s work with the housebound seniors in the community proved there was a need for many more supportive services. . . . Sister Alice was involved in the church prayer groups, visiting the sick and assisting the Spanish Senior Citizen Program.”

In 1981, Sister Alice returned to Our Lady of Good Counsel, Mankato, and assisted in food service until 1985. She continued her story, “Again, I met a new challenge when I was hired by the Le Sueur County Human Services in New Prague. My duties were to visit the homebound, cook and clean for them, do their shopping and observe any medical needs and report them to the nurse in our program. I enjoyed helping people improve their living conditions. After eight years, I was invited by the administration of Queen of Peace Hospital in New Prague to join their new home health program. During the 15 years working for Le Sueur County and Queen of Peace Hospital, I lived intercommunity with School Sisters of Notre Dame and School Sisters of St. Francis from Layton Boulevard in Milwaukee.”

Sister Alice returned once more to Our Lady of Good Counsel, Mankato, in 2000, where she assisted in a variety of ways until her retirement in 2005. Along with Sister Veronica, she visited with family members in their homes and looked forward to these times with family. Family members also enjoyed having the sisters visit them.

Concluding her autobiography, Sister Alice wrote, “I am grateful for the opportunity to be of community service, to be a person of prayer and presence, and to enjoy my retirement years here at [Our Lady of] Good Counsel.” Sister Alice responded in love to God’s call. May she now experience that “everlasting love” in eternal life.

The Funeral Mass for Sister Mary Alice was held Friday, January 12, in the Windermere chapel, Shakopee, with Father Joe Fogal as presider. Visitation and Sharing of Memories preceded the Liturgy. Burial in the Our Lady of Good Counsel cemetery in Mankato followed. Sister Alice is survived by her sister, Monica Podolak; nieces and nephews; her sisters in community, the School Sisters of Notre Dame and SSND associates. She was preceded in death by her parents, Adam and Magdalena (Gross) Wald; her sisters, Sister Veronica, SSND, Catherine Meyer, Christine Larson, Dorothy Schlosser, Eva Wilkes and Magdalen Remien; and her brothers, Adam, Andrew, Joseph, Peter, Anton and Valentine.

*By Sister Mary Kay Ash, SSND*