



In Loving Memory

Sister Mary Benilda Dix

Sister Mary Benilda Dix, 93, died peacefully on Holy Thursday, April 6, 2023, at Trinity Woods, Milwaukee, Wisconsin. She patiently awaited full union with God.

In Milwaukee, Wisconsin, on May 27, 1929, Martin and Helen Dix welcomed their first child, Mary Magdalene. She was baptized June 2, 1929, at St. Hyacinth Parish, Milwaukee. She was the first of six children. Mary Magdalen attended grade school at St. John Kanty, Milwaukee, where she received her entire grade school education. In 6th grade, she wrote in a composition, “the shadow of religious life is haunting me.” After graduation from 8th grade, Magdalen attended St. Stanislaus High School (later changed to Notre Dame High School), Milwaukee, where she had won a four-year scholarship.

Birth
May 27, 1929

Baptism
June 2, 1929

Profession
August 11, 1949

Death
April 6, 2023

Burial
Notre Dame of Elm Grove
Cemetery

Magdalen entered the postulancy on August 28, 1946, in Milwaukee. She spent one year at the motherhouse and one year at St. John Cantius in Chicago, Illinois, teaching the fourth grade. The following year, on August 10, 1948, Magdalen received the name, Mary Benilda, going by Benilda, as her preferred name, and began her year of novitiate. August 11, 1949, Sister Benilda pronounced her first vows. Her brother, who joined the Society of Mary, had his reception and profession dates during the same weeks. It kept the family moving from one ceremony to another.

Sister Benilda earned a bachelor’s degree in English from Mount Mary College (now University), Milwaukee, in 1957, and a master’s degree in English in 1964, from Notre Dame University, Notre Dame, Indiana.

Sister Benilda’s ministry experiences began as a primary teacher for four years at St. Casimir School in Milwaukee. In 1953, she was transferred to teaching English at Notre Dame High School in Milwaukee. After her first year there, she became the adviser of the school paper and began teaching journalism class. In 1965, Sister Benilda taught English at Holy Name Central in Escanaba, Michigan. In 1971, Sister Benilda was sent to Marinette Catholic Central High in Marinette, Wisconsin. From 1971-1975, Sister Benilda served on the provincial assembly and was elected a councilor for missions, serving Green Bay, Wisconsin, and up north to all the missions in the Upper Peninsula of Michigan. Sister Benilda was a councilor for a total of eight years, the last four were in Mequon, Wisconsin.

Sister Benilda wrote for 24 years on the “School Sister,” a magazine for the public and donors. After her leadership position, was asked to become Director of Communications. The first “Circle” came out in 1984, and it became part of Sister Benilda’s life for 20 years. Sister Benilda moved to Elm Grove, Wisconsin, at the time the provincial offices moved in 1997. She became involved in the community library and loved life at Notre Dame of Elm Grove. Sister Benilda also wrote the book, “Love Cannot Wait,” which was published in 1987. She wrote about the life and charism of Blessed Theresa of Jesus Gerhardinger.

*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

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Sister Benilda did everything with love, her kind heart and patience. She was deeply grateful for every day of her religious life.

The funeral Mass was held, Friday, April 14, 2023, at the Mother Caroline Chapel at Trinity Woods, Milwaukee, Wisconsin, with Father Leonard Barbian as presider. A prayer of remembrance preceded the funeral. Burial followed in the Elm Grove cemetery, Elm Grove, Wisconsin. Sister Benilda is survived by her sister, Ann (Gene) Haderer; and her brother, Richard Dix, SM. She was preceded in death by her parents, Martin and Helen Dix; her sisters, Theresa (Al) Placek and Pat (George) Miller; and her brother, Jim (Rita) Dix.

By Sister Marie Rose Van Deurzen, SSND

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