

In Loving Memory

Sister Mary Blaise Sorenson



Birth
June 13, 1932

Baptism
June 19, 1932

Profession
July 18, 1952

Death
April 6, 2024

Burial
Notre Dame of Elm Grove

*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 Blaise Sorenson, 91, died peacefully on Saturday, April 6, at Trinity Woods, Milwaukee, Wisconsin. She had patiently awaited full union with God.

On June 13, 1932, in Stevens Point, Wisconsin, Johanna and Leonard Sorenson welcomed their fifth child, Loretta Ann. Loretta Ann was baptized June 19, 1932, at St. Stephen. The family grew to include a total of 10 children: Virginia, Leonard Jr., Ramona and Florence, who were all older than Loretta. Her younger siblings were Ferdinand, Shirley, Veronica, Joannie and Jim.

Loretta loved her School Sisters of Notre Dame (SSND) teachers at St. Stephen. Sister Mary Eustace Roy (8th grade) recruited girls every year to join SSND. Loretta agreed to join, so when school started, she went to The Academy of Our Lady in Evergreen Park, Chicago. Two years later, Loretta was admitted to the Milwaukee Candidature on September 5, 1948, where she completed her high school studies.

From January 1950 until that April, Loretta began practice teaching under the guidance of Sister Francis Regis for the first grade class at St. Patrick School in Menasha, Wisconsin.

On July 17, 1951, Loretta received the name, Mary Blaise and began her year of novitiate. On July 18, 1952, she pronounced her first vows and then her final vows on July 18, 1958. Mary Blaise earned a bachelor's degree in English from Mount Mary College (now University), in Milwaukee.

Sister Mary Blaise's ministry experiences began as a primary teacher at St. Patrick School in Menasha. In 1951, she taught at Our Lady of Peace, Marshfield, Wisconsin. In 1952 Sister Mary Blaise was sent to teach grades one and two at St. Willibrord in Green Bay, Wisconsin. In 1953, she taught intermediate grades for five years at St. Michael. In 1958 made the move to teach grades five and six at Blessed Sacrament in Morton, Illinois. In 1960 she taught junior-high at Notre Dame, Chippewa Falls, Wisconsin. The following year she taught junior-high at Holy Angels in Gary, Indiana. In 1963, she taught grades seven and eight for a duration of five years at St. Francis Xavier in Superior, Wisconsin.

Sister Mary Blaise returned to Milwaukee in 1968 and taught at St. Stephen. She had one year doing community service at Notre Dame of the Lake in Mequon, Wisconsin in 1970. Following that, she added to her extensive record as an educator at Messmer High School in Milwaukee. In 1972 she became a childcare worker at Cedarcrest Home for Girls in Milwaukee. She enjoyed this ministry for fourteen years.

continued

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Sorenson*



In 1986 Sister Mary Blaise began a new chapter of ministry as a counselor at Elmbrook Memorial Hospital, Brookfield and De Paul Rehabilitation Center, all which were located in Milwaukee.

In 2001 Sister Marie Blaise retired and began a diverse volunteer ministry. She brought her talents to church programs, the boards of health care facilities, human relations coordination and even as an assistant staff member for nighttime women’s shelters. She was involved with the Milwaukee Council on Alcoholism and provided support to a family services phone hotline. She also catechized high schoolers at various parishes.

She visited nursing homes and children’s centers with her dog, Cracker Jacks, a little terrier who entertained residents and staff by singing and dancing. In 2023 she moved to Trinity Woods, Milwaukee.

Sister Mary Blaise was grateful to the community for the opportunities she had to self-develop and a lifestyle that allowed her to carry out the mission of the SSND community: serving those of greatest need. She was grateful to the caring staff at Trinity Woods as well as the opportunities she had to visit the sisters.

The funeral Mass was held, Thursday, April 18, at the Mother Caroline chapel at Trinity Woods, with Father Leonard Barbian as presider. A prayer of remembrance preceded the funeral. Natural burial took place on April 8 in the Elm Grove cemetery.

Sister Mary Blaise is survived by her sisters, Mona, Shirley, Joannie and Veronica and her brothers Jim and Fred, as well as numerous nieces and nephews. She was preceded in death by her parents, Leonard and Johanna and her sisters Virginia and Florence and her brother Leonard, Jr.

By Sister Marie Rose Van Deurzen, SSND

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