



**Birth**  
June 22, 1930

**Baptism**  
July 13, 1930

**Profession**  
August 2, 1951

**Death**  
October 23, 2019

**Burial**  
Sancta Maria in Ripa  
Cemetery, St. Louis, MO

*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 Mary Odile Poliquin

Sister Mary Odile Poliquin, 89, passed away peacefully at Anna House, The Sarah Community in Bridgeton, Missouri, on October 23, 2019. She was the second of six children born to Laura (Smith) and Eugene Poliquin on June 22, 1930, in Mattoon, Illinois. She was baptized on July 13, 1930 at Immaculate Conception Church in Mattoon and received the name Laura Rose. The oldest and youngest children in the family were boys with the four girls in between.

Laura began her elementary education at St. Joseph School in Mattoon, where she was taught by the Dominican Sisters from Kentucky. When she was in the second grade, her father, who was employed as a machinist for the New York Central Railroad, was transferred to Terre Haute, Indiana. Laura attended St. Patrick and St. Benedict Schools staffed by the Sisters of Providence in Terre Haute. When she was thirteen, the family moved to St. Louis, Missouri. She completed her elementary education at the Cathedral School and enrolled at Rosati-Kain High School where she was taught by the School Sisters of Notre Dame.

After graduation from high school, Laura entered the candidature at Sancta Maria in Ripa on September 1, 1948. During her second year of candidature, she was missioned to St. Gerard Majella Grade School in San Antonio, Texas, to teach second grade. She was received into the novitiate on August 1, 1950, and given the name Mary Odile. She had asked for this name since it had been in the Poliquin family for generations. She professed first vows on August 2, 1951, and final vows on August 2, 1957. She received a bachelor's degree in English from the former Notre Dame College, St. Louis, in 1964.

As a newly professed, Sister Odile was missioned to St. Jude Academy, San Diego, California. Two years later, she was transferred to St. Joseph, Holtville, California. At these two schools, most of the children did not speak English when they came to school and Sister Odile did not speak Spanish. Somehow, the children learned to read, write and speak English. Returning to the Midwest, she was missioned to St. Agatha, New Athens, Illinois; St. John, Burlington, Iowa; St. Michael, Hastings, Nebraska; St. Engelbert, St. Louis, Missouri; Aquinas-East in Fort Madison, Iowa. She was also principal at St. Michael in Hastings.

After 39 years of teaching primary children, Sister Odile spent a semester working in the dining room at Villa Gesu in St. Louis, and a semester studying at the University of Notre Dame, learning about parish ministry. In 1991, she returned to her home parish in Mattoon, Illinois, as the director of religious education. She closed the mission in 1998 and came back to St. Louis to do community service. She offered to bake and with some lessons from her sister who owned the "O and K Bakery" near Sancta Maria in Ripa, she began baking for the 100 sisters living there.

In 2007, Sister Odile retired to Veronica House and in 2015, to Anna House. She died peacefully at Anna House in the evening of October 23, 2019, as sisters

*continued*

# In Loving Memory



*Sister Mary Odile Poliquin*



and family members prayed with her.

The wake service was held at The Sarah Community and Theresa Center on October 28, 2019. The Mass of Christian Burial was celebrated the following morning with Rev. Robert Leibrecht presiding. Interment was in the Sancta Maria in Ripa cemetery.

Attending the funeral services were her sisters, Mary Werner of Frontenac, Missouri; Odile Lampe of Ellisville, Missouri and Rita Reilley of Seattle, Washington; her brother, Michael Poliquin of St. Peters, Missouri; nieces, nephews and their families; classmates; friends and SSND. She was preceded in death by her parents and her brother Thomas.

Sister Odile was an excellent primary educator and prepared many children for the reception of the Sacraments. She was a compassionate and caring teacher, especially for the most challenging children. She was a positive, encouraging person and an enjoyable community member. "Boss" was a nickname she had to exemplify her organization and her willingness to take control of a situation. When she moved to Veronica House, she quickly organized the kitchenette so she could continue her baking.

As an excellent baker, many sisters delighted in the delicious rolls, buns and other pastries that she made. She was cherished by her family and after her mother's death, Sister Odile took on the role of "grandmother" for her nieces and nephews. A tradition in the family was to bring pies to celebrate some event in the family. It was fitting, therefore, that family members brought pies to celebrate Sister Odile's life with each other and the sisters, after the wake service at Sancta Maria in Ripa.

As her eyesight diminished, she would often use audio recordings for books, spiritual reading and for listening to music. She was a prayerful person and saw prayer as part of her ministry during her retirement years, thus, continuing to proclaim the mission of Jesus. May she now rejoice in the love of her God as she is welcomed into her new life!

*By Sister Carol Marie Wildt, SSND*

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