



Birth
Dec. 5, 1915

Baptism
Dec. 12, 1915

First Profession
July 19, 1935

Death
Dec. 2, 2016

Burial
Our Lady of Good
Counsel Cemetery
Mankato, Minnesota

*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. Sheila McCall, SSND

Just three days before her 101st birthday, Sister M. Sheila McCall, 100, died Friday, Dec. 2, 2016, in Notre Dame Health Care, Our Lady of Good Counsel, Mankato, Minnesota. Members of the Notre Dame Health Care staff were with her when she died.

Sister Sheila began her autobiography: “Amidst a violent snowstorm on the morning of Dec. 5, 1915, a wee little baby came to our home as a Christmas gift. That baby was none other than myself, the fifth of eight children. I was given only one name, Catherine, because there was a diversity of opinion in the family concerning the second name.” The McCall family resided in St. Paul, where Catherine and her brothers and sisters attended St. Andrew School, and were taught by School Sisters of Notre Dame.

Sister Sheila commented on her family life: “I was fortunate in having Edward McCall and Dora Jensen as my very remarkable parents. We lived a happy, satisfying life in St. Paul. My mother was convinced that no one was truly an educated person unless they had some knowledge of music. I had a number of good piano lessons from Sister M. Theophane (Dreis) while in grades three and four.”

In 1926, when Catherine was eleven, her father died. She wrote, “It seems that my father’s death made it easier for me to carry out my big plan, namely to become a religious.” The following September, Catherine entered the aspiranture at Good Counsel in Mankato as an eighth grader. She continued, “The reason for my departure from our dear home this early was to relieve my poor mother.” During the summers, she returned home to be with her family.

Following high school graduation in 1932, Catherine entered the SSND candidature. During her second year, she did her practice teaching and later wrote, “That year was a revelation to me, for little did I realize the duties and hardships of a teacher. All the same, I loved the work and am eagerly looking forward to many years in the classroom.” Catherine was received into the novitiate in 1934 and given the name, Sister M. Sheila. After profession of first vows in 1935, she began a teaching ministry that did indeed encompass “many years in the classroom.” Serving first as an intermediate grade teacher and then a junior high instructor, she taught in the following schools: St. Felix, Wabasha (1935-38); St. Mary, New England, North Dakota (1938-42 and 1949-52); St. Peter, Hokah (1942-46); and St. Peter, New Haven, Iowa (1946-49). For the next several years, she taught in the state of Washington: St. Mary, Chewlelah (1952-53); Holy Family, Clarkston (1953-57); Christ the King, Omak (1957-58); and Guardian Angel, Colton (1958-1960). Her remaining years in full-time education were spent in Minnesota: St. Mary, Madelia, where she was also principal (1960-66); Holy Childhood, St. Paul (1966-68); Holy Rosary, North Mankato (1968-72); Providence, South St. Paul (1972-73); St. Francis de Sales, St. Paul (1973-79); and St. Agnes, St. Paul (1979-1986). In 1986 she began tutoring at St. Agnes, a position she held until 1989. In 1989 she returned to St. Francis de Sales as a part-time teacher until

continued

In Loving Memory



Sister Sheila McCall



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1995. From 1995 until 1999, she served as a tutor at St. Francis-St. James United. During her years of teaching, she earned a bachelor's degree in 1944 from Mount Mary College, Milwaukee, Wisconsin and a master's degree in 1964 from the College of St. Thomas, Saint Paul, Minnesota.

As an educator, Sister Sheila encouraged students to work to their full potential. She endeared herself to students and staff, as was evidenced in these comments by St. Francis-St. James United School principal Regina Niichel when Sister Sheila retired in 1999: "Sister Mary Sheila is the school 'handy lady.' When there is a job to be done, I go to her. Of all her many talents, religion is the most polished! She was the school religion specialist. She knew quickly where to find a Bible passage and could answer or find the answer to most religious questions. She is most congenial and loves to tell jokes and even dance the Irish jig. Prayer is a most important priority and I hope she will continue to pray for us as we will for her." Sister Sheila commented about her tutoring, "I am blessed in my ministry of tutoring at St. Francis-St. James United. I am very busy encouraging and challenging my dear students to greater effort and perseverance."

Sister Sheila appreciated the opportunity to teach in several states. She loved to travel and attributed that to her mother, who also loved to travel. Sister Sheila described some of her travel experiences: "I have been fortunate to travel to New York for a workshop, and also Boulder, Colorado. I have also traveled to a number of southern states and also to Mexico City. What a great thrill to see Our Lady of Guadalupe Basilica and the famous picture. Traveling is a great spiritual and educational treat. Our spiritual renewal program in Rome in 1981 was super. Participating in the processions and liturgies and viewing all the sights of Lourdes was indeed a privilege."

Sister Sheila's family was extremely important to her. On the occasion of her 90th birthday, her family members compiled a scrapbook of their memories of her. Over and over the comments attest to Sister Sheila's love and support of her family, along with her wonderful sense of humor. In line with that characteristic, following her retirement to Good Counsel, she would share the joke of the day with sisters and staff.

The funeral liturgy, with Father Eugene Stenzel as presider, was held Tuesday, December 6, in Our Lady of Good Counsel Chapel, followed by burial in the Good Counsel Cemetery. She is survived by nieces and nephews, and her sisters in community, the School Sisters of Notre Dame. She was preceded in death by her parents, Edward and Dora (Jensen) McCall, her sisters Alicia Maas, Betty Tucci, and Agnes McCall, and her brothers Paul, John, Leo and Edward.

By Sister Mary Kay Ash, SSND