



**Birth**  
February 1, 1912

**Baptism**  
February 8, 1912

**First Profession**  
July 19, 1935

**Death**  
March 6, 2013

**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 Mary (M. Eustachia) Schilling, SSND

Sister Mary (M. Eustachia) Schilling, 101, died Wednesday, March 6, 2013, in Notre Dame Health Care Center, Our Lady of Good Counsel Campus, Mankato, Minnesota. Sister Mary was the last School Sister of Notre Dame in Mankato who was older than Good Counsel which celebrated its centenary in 2012. Her grandniece, Renee Schunk, was with her when she died, and other family members, including her sister Colette, had visited earlier in the evening.

Sister Mary, the fifth girl in the family, was born February 1, 1912, on a farm outside of Hoppers, a small town in northwestern Iowa. At her baptism one week later in St. Anthony Church, she received the name Mary. The Schilling family grew as two more girls and two boys were born over the next several years.

In the spring following her sixth birthday, Mary accompanied her older sisters to the Catholic school conducted by Franciscan Sisters from Dubuque, Iowa. After a few days, she became very ill, and eventually had to have her tonsils and adenoids removed. Those few days in school were her only Catholic school experience, as the family moved to Wanda, Minnesota in fall, and she continued her education in public school.

After graduating from Lamberton High School in 1930, Mary stayed home to help for two years. Later she wrote "It was during the time of a parish mission, conducted by an Oblate Father, that I decided to become a sister, although I had thought about it during my grade school years. In the spring of 1932 I visited Good Counsel in Mankato, and later applied to the Candidature for permission to enter. I was welcomed to my convent home on August 27, 1932."

After studying in the candidature for one year, Mary was missioned to St. Matthew School, St. Paul, where she taught second grade. At the close of the school year, she returned to Good Counsel to prepare for her reception into the Novitiate. She continued her story, "On July 18, my father's birthday, I entered the novitiate as Novice Mary Eustachia, called so since our pastor's name was Reverend Eustace Frederick. Later when we had the privilege of resuming our baptismal names, I quickly and gladly became Sister Mary." She professed first vows on July 19, 1935.

Sister Mary spent the next 45 years as a teacher, first of intermediate grades, and later of junior and senior high school students. In Minnesota, she taught at the following schools: SS. Peter & Paul, Mankato; St. Anthony, Lismore; All Saints, Madison Lake; St. Anne, Wabasso; St. Agnes, Sacred Heart and Holy Childhood, in St. Paul; St. Mark, Shakopee; St. Michael, St. Michael; and St. Mary of the Lake, Plymouth. In Iowa, she taught at Immaculate Conception/Don Bosco in Gilbertville three different times. She also spent three years at St. Pius School, St. Pius, North Dakota. In 1945 she earned a B.A. in education from Loras College, Dubuque, and in 1967, an M.A. in secondary counseling from St. Thomas College, St. Paul. While

*continued*

# In Loving Memory



*Sister Mary Schilling*



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teaching Spanish at Don Bosco in the 1970s, she chaperoned groups of students as they visited Mexico. She also acted as a chaperone for a group of Mexican students who visited Washington, D.C.

In 1979, Sister Mary came to Good Counsel Academy in Mankato. It was the final school year for the academy and Sister Mary's final year as a classroom teacher. After working as a parish minister at St. Francis de Sales Parish, St. Paul, from 1980 until 1982, she moved to St. Andrew Convent, St. Paul, where, in addition to helping with parish ministry, she worked as a liturgical seamstress for a company in Minneapolis for two years. From 1984 until 1989, she was co-director of the G.E.D. program at Presentation Continuing Education Center in Chicago, and helped African-Americans ranging in age from 16 to 65 receive their high school diploma. She wrote at that time, "Our program is unique. It is an entirely individualized program where students progress at their own speed. . . . I am realizing how much my life has been enriched through my ministry. This ministry to the very poor in a high crime area has proved to be the most inspiring, as well as the most rewarding period of my life. I thank God for these rich years of my life in Chicago."

Sister Mary returned to St. Andrew Convent in St. Paul in 1989, and stayed until 1999. In addition to being a Eucharistic minister, she helped in the school and parish wherever she could, whether it was stuffing envelopes and assembling bulletins or helping parishioners prepare and serve meals at the Dorothy Day Center. When Theresa Living Center needed help with mailings, she took the bus and volunteered her time there.

In 1999, Sister Mary returned to Good Counsel. After she moved into health care, she endeared herself to the personnel. Her 100th birthday in 2012 was observed quietly with short visits by sisters and family members, several of whom had visited her often in her last years.

The funeral Mass for Sister Mary, with Father Eugene Stenzel as president, was held March 11, in Good Counsel Chapel, followed by burial in the convent cemetery. She is survived by one sister, Colette Schunk, a sister-in-law, Clara, and her nieces and nephews and their families, and her sisters in community, the School Sisters of Notre Dame. She was preceded in death by her parents, Joseph and Margaret (Pohlen) Schilling, two brothers, John and Joseph, and five sisters, Margaret Zins, Anna Turbes, Susan Turbes, Elizabeth Neudecker, and Esther Cadwallader.

*By Sister Mary Kay Ash, SSND*