

In Loving Memory

Sister M. Ramona Schweich, SSND



Birth
August 17, 1922

Baptism
August 20, 1922

Profession
July 22, 1943

Death
March 11, 2012

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

Sister M. Ramona Schweich, 89, died Sunday, March 11, 2012, in Notre Dame Health Care Center, Good Counsel Campus, Mankato, Minnesota. Several sisters and her niece, Susan Woodwick, were with her when she died.

Sister Ramona (Mildred Margaret Schweich) was born August 17, 1922, on the family farm near New Trier, Minn. Because of concern about her health, she was baptized three days later. Mildred experienced strong family love as she was growing up with three brothers and two sisters. She wrote, "I used to pray that I would be the first one to die in my family because I thought I could never go on living if anyone in the family died." She loved living on the farm, and always considered herself a "country girl." For eight years she attended St. Mary's School, New Trier, where she was taught by the School Sisters of Notre Dame. In her autobiography, Sister Ramona related an incident during her grade school years that directly impacted her choice of vocation: "When I was about ten years old, Reverend Mother Almeda from Germany visited America [1933]. My dad was asked to take the New Trier sisters to see her. When she heard that he had three daughters, she gave him three holy cards and said that some day she wanted to claim one of them as a School Sister of Notre Dame. That holy card haunted me and eventually I thought being a sister was a good idea."

In 1936, Mildred enrolled as a freshman aspirant at Good Counsel Academy, Mankato. She graduated in 1940 and entered the candidature the following September. In 1942 she was received into the novitiate and given the name Sister M. Ramona. She professed first vows on July 22, 1943. Later that summer she received her first teaching assignment: junior high grades at St. Andrew, St. Paul, Minn. where she stayed until 1946. In the following years she taught junior and senior high students, often in the fields of religion, math and science, in several schools: St. Felix, Wabasha, Minn. (1946-47); St. Mary, Madelia, Minn. (1947-50); Guardian Angel/Notre Dame Academy, Colton, Wash. (1950-54); St. Peter, New Haven, Iowa (1954-56); St. Peter, Hokah, Minn. (1956-60); Loyola High School, Mankato (1960-64); St. Agnes, St. Paul, Minn. (1964-1969); and Cotter High School, Winona, Minn. (1969-70). During these years, she earned a bachelor's degree in English from the College of St. Catherine, St. Paul, Minn. (1949) and a master's degree in education from Gonzaga University, Spokane, Wash. (1956). She also earned several post-graduate credits in a variety of subjects.

Sister Ramona became campus minister at the Moorhead State College Newman Center, Moorhead, Minn. in 1970. When one of the faculty members died unexpectedly, Sister Ramona was asked by the college administration to take the vacancy, which she did.

In 1971, Sister Ramona became principal of Good Counsel Academy in Mankato, a position she held until 1973. At that time, she was diagnosed with lymphoma, and the prognosis was not good. In fact, she began preparing for death, and wrote about this in *A Little Wine*, the book that she and Father Paul Halloran co-authored in 1974. In the introduction, she

continued

In Loving Memory



Sister M. Ramona Schweich



To make a memorial gift,
please visit our secure
online donation page [here](#)>

For more information,
contact info@ssndcp.org.

www.ssndcentralpacific.org



**School Sisters
of Notre Dame**
Central Pacific Province

TRANSFORMING THE WORLD
THROUGH EDUCATION

wrote, “The articles in this volume are Father Paul Halloran’s – written by him, alive, vibrant, and on the move. To each of these articles I have added a concrete thought ‘for the day’ written as I sit here preparing for death. The articles are from a person full of life; the resolutions are penned by one who is in full view of death.” In actuality, her chemotherapy treatment was successful, and in a second collaboration, *A Little More Wine*, (1977) Sister Ramona expressed her appreciation to medical personnel for their role in bringing the lymphoma into remission. As she regained her health, Sister Ramona became the Coordinator of the Mankato Campus of Mount Mary College, Milwaukee, Wis. (1973-77) and an educational consultant for the Winona Diocese (1975-76). In 1977, she was welcomed back as principal of Good Counsel Academy. Sister Ramona stayed at Good Counsel for one year, and then became high school counselor at Loyola in Mankato (1978-83).

In 1983, at the request of the pastor at SS. Peter & Paul, Mankato, she began another ministry, that of pastoral worker, a position she held until 1991. She was recognized by the Mankato YWCA in 1986, receiving a leadership award for her “help and ministry that reached beyond the parish.” From 1991 until 1993, Sister Ramona assisted at Good Counsel Education Center as director of residents and pastoral minister.

Looking forward to retirement, Sister Ramona moved to St. Dominic Parish, Northfield, Minn. in 1993. After a sabbatical year, she served in part-time parish ministry until 2003. Following a short stay at Guardian Angels, Oakdale, Minn., Sister Ramona came to Good Counsel in 2004. She continued her outreach as much as she was able, and stayed in contact with family and friends via letters, phone and e-mail. She was a very welcoming presence to all who stopped by her room for a visit.

The funeral Mass for Sister Ramona, with Fr. Paul Nelson and Fr. Charles Quinn as co-presiders, was held on March 19 in Good Counsel Chapel, with a vigil the evening before. She is survived by her sister, Jeanette Fox, and her brother, Ralph. Sister Ramona was preceded in death by her parents, Peter and Susan (Gergen) Schweich, a sister, Monica Woodwick, and brothers, Roman and Gerald.

May she rest in peace, enjoying the gift of eternal life.

By Sister Mary Kay Ash, SSND