

In Loving Memory

Sister Beverly (Mary Evelyn) Reck



Birth
May 14, 1938

Baptism
May 26, 1946

Profession
July 31, 1958

Death
July 24, 2017

Burial
Sancta Maria in Ripa
Cemetery
St. Louis, Missouri

*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

The oldest of three daughters was born to Evelyn (Kessler) and Leo Reck on May 14, 1938 in the small mining village of Kortcamp, three miles outside of Hillsboro, Illinois. She was named Beverly Kay. In 1941, the family moved to East St. Louis, Illinois and three years later, Beverly began her grade school education at Holy Angels where she was taught by the School Sisters of Notre Dame.

The pastor visited the home and asked her parents if they had any objections to Beverly being baptized. He felt that she would want to make her first Holy Communion with her classmates. Her parents consented and Beverly and her sister, Carole, were baptized on May 26, 1946. She received her first Holy Communion with the rest of her second grade class. Her third sister, Diana Lynn, was born the following November. Two years later, her mother was baptized and her parents were married in the church.

In 1950, the family moved again; this time to Collinsville, Illinois and the children were enrolled in Sts. Peter and Paul Catholic School staffed by the Ursuline Sisters. After graduation, Beverly attended the Academy of Notre Dame in Belleville, Illinois where she was once again taught by the School Sisters of Notre Dame. During her sophomore year retreat, the thought of becoming a sister began to surface but she kept making excuses. After a visit to Sancta Maria in Ripa in her senior year, she casually told her mother that she almost signed up to enter the candidature. Her mother's response was "Why didn't you?" Her father was a little harder to convince, but he did not have any real objections to her entrance into the candidature.

Beverly received the candidate's bonnet in a simple ceremony at Sts. Peter and Paul Church on June 16, 1956. She was received into the novitiate on July 30, 1957, and given the name Mary Evelyn in honor of her mother. Profession of first vows was on July 31, 1958, and final vows on July 31, 1964.

During the second semester of her senior year in college, she was missioned to Our Lady of Mount Carmel, Herrin, Illinois to teach the third and fourth grade children. Following graduation from the former Notre Dame College in 1960 with a degree in history, she was sent to Our Lady of Mount Carmel, Houston, Texas to teach primary children. With the establishment of the South Central Province in 1961 and since she had not yet made final profession, she was re-assigned to St. Hedwig, St. Louis, Missouri. The school closed in 1970 and she was the last sister to leave the convent.

S. Beverly received a master's degree in elementary administration from St. Louis University in 1970 and was an elementary principal for 28 years. She ministered at Holy Family, Freeburg, MO; St. William, St. Louis, MO; St. Hilary, Pico Rivera, CA; St. Mary Magdalen, Brentwood, MO and St. Mary School, Johnson City, TN. She also served as administrator at Notre Dame Hall, St. Louis, MO for three years.

continued

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During her time in Johnson City, her health began to decline. After five years, she realized that the position was too much and applied for the part-time librarian opening at Blessed Sacrament, Belleville, IL. This enabled her to also assist her aged mother on weekends. Following her mother's death, a sabbatical and volunteer services at The Sarah Community, S. Beverly moved to Sun City, AZ in 2008. For two and half years, she volunteered at various places. In 2010, she fell and broke the femur in her right leg and returned to St. Louis. She was missioned to Veronica House in 2014, having been diagnosed with kidney cancer. In 2015, a kidney was removed and in 2016, she had lung surgery. She died peacefully on July 24, 2017 at the Sarah Community with family members and sisters praying with her.

A wake/vigil was held at the Sarah Community and Theresa Center on July 28, 2017. The Mass of Christian Burial was celebrated the following morning with Rev. Clyde Grogan presiding. Burial was in the Ripa cemetery. Her three nieces: Tracy Whetstone of Glenview, IL; Melissa Liston of Powell, OH and Marnie McDaniel of Orion, IL, their spouses and children, classmates from her profession class and from her graduating class at the Academy of Notre Dame, sisters and friends were present for the funeral services. S. Beverly was preceded in death by her parents and her two sisters; Carole Lee Dyer and Diana Lynn Wilson.

S. Beverly was remembered as a person who had a positive approach to the many challenges in her life and with courage faced these difficulties. She was deeply loved by her family members and at times, undertook the role of a surrogate mother to her nieces. She loved to play cards and to read the e-books on her Kindle. Her warm smile and friendly manner enabled her to get to know many of the people she contacted in her ministry and volunteer services. Freed from suffering, may she now rejoice in the love and peace of her God as she rejoins her family members who have gone before her!

By Sister Carol Marie Wildt, SSND