

# *In Loving Memory*

## Sister Carol Ann (M. Leogene) Gosse



Sister Carol Ann Gosse, SSND, 87, died Saturday, August 3, 2024, at Benedictine Living Community in Shakopee, Minnesota.

Six days before Christmas in 1936, a baby girl was born to Leo and Mary Gosse in Wabasha, Minnesota. Named Carol Ann, the baby was baptized at St. Felix Church in Wabasha shortly after Christmas. Carol Ann was the second child and first daughter for the family, joining her four-year-old brother, Gene. Another daughter, Mary Pat, and son, David, later completed the family. While their mother cared for the children, their father worked as the local baker in Wabasha.

Birth  
December 19, 1936

Baptism  
December 27, 1936

Profession  
July 17, 1958

Death  
August 3, 2024

Burial  
Our Lady of Good Counsel  
Cemetery

Carol Ann was enrolled as a first grader at St. Felix School in 1942, where her teachers were School Sisters of Notre Dame (SSND). Toward the end of sixth grade, Carol Ann contracted double pneumonia and kidney trouble and recovered just in time for summer vacation. Her autobiography describes how that vacation was partially spent catching up on school work: "Sister Leonessa [Wernette], however, had different ideas and we spent most of our mornings on the side porch of St. Felix Convent learning reading, writing and arithmetic."

Carol Ann's father died in November 1947. The family remained in Wabasha until Carol Ann graduated from St. Felix in 1950 and then moved to Red Wing, Minnesota. Carol Ann became a freshman at Red Wing High School and later wrote: "Up until this time I had never considered being a sister, but started to give it thought seeing the difference between the education I received my first eight years and the education I now was receiving. It was very thorough as far as education goes, but religion was completely left out. During my junior year I became acquainted with the SSNDs at Red Wing. They as a community and as individuals did much to encourage me and foster in me a desire to become a School Sister of Notre Dame."

Family circumstances postponed her entry into the SSND candidature. After graduation from high school in 1954, she worked one year as a stenographer at the State Capitol in St. Paul, Minnesota, and one year at the State Employment Office in Red Wing. During that second year, she became better acquainted with the sisters in Red Wing and used it as a time of preparation for entrance into the candidature, which occurred on September 1, 1956.

After her year in the candidature, Carol Ann was received into the novitiate on July 16, 1957, and given the name Sister Mary Leogene, a combination of her father's and brother's names. She later returned to her baptismal name. She professed first vows in 1958 and spent the next year on Good Counsel Hill, continuing her college education. In 1959, she received her first teaching assignment, intermediate grades at SS. Peter & Paul in Blue Earth, Minnesota.

For the next 20 years, minus two years off for a sabbatical and a year of community service, she ministered as a teacher of grade levels ranging from intermediate to high school at St. Matthew, St. Paul; John Ireland, St. Peter;

*continued*

*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.*

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(M. Leogene) Gosse*



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St. Mary, Shakopee; St. Stanislaus, Winona; and Trinity High School, Dickinson, North Dakota. She completed her bachelor's degree in education from Mount Mary University, Milwaukee, in 1968 and earned a master's degree in religious studies from St. Mary's University in Winona in 1980. While teaching at St. Stanislaus in Winona, she was recognized with an outstanding young educator's award.

In 1979, Sister Carol Ann transitioned to a focus on religious education, becoming the director of the religion program at St. Gabriel's parish in Fulda, Minnesota. Living in community with the sisters in Worthington, she commuted daily to Fulda. A newspaper article described the many hats she wore: "She coordinates the religious education programs for grades one through twelve, conducts teacher training for the many programs held at the church, organizes summer Bible school, and visits with parishioners in the nursing home. She conducts prayer services when the pastor is absent, has a baptismal program, visits couples with young children and conducts a two-year Confirmation class for 10th and 11th graders."

She remained at Fulda until 1983 and then continued as director of religious education at St. Philip, Litchfield, Minnesota (1983-85) and St. Michael, St. Cloud, Minnesota (1985-2000). In 2000, her title changed to pastoral minister when she moved to Immaculate Conception Parish in Rice, Minnesota (also in the St. Cloud Diocese), where she served until 2005. Following one year at St. Anthony Parish in St. Cloud, she became a pastoral minister and BeFriender coordinator at St. Odilia Parish in Shoreview, north of St. Paul, in 2006. She filled a number of roles at St. Odilia, with the main one being a parish visitor, allowing her to form lasting relationships with many parishioners. She remained at St. Odilia until she moved to Shakopee in November 2022.

Sister Carol Ann was an active participant in the Good Counsel Craft Fair. In the 1990s, she crafted plaques using a jigsaw. In later years, she raised plants and was responsible for the plant area of the Craft Fair. She also joined with other SSNDs in the St. Paul area for various events and enjoyed visits with her family.

The funeral Mass for Sister Carol Ann was held on Tuesday, August 6, in the Windermere chapel with Father Joe Fogal as presider. Visitation and sharing of memories preceded the liturgy. Burial in the Good Counsel cemetery in Mankato will follow at a later date. Sister Carol Ann is survived by her sister, Mary Pat (Jeff) Cole, her brothers David (Vicky) and Eugene, nieces and nephews and her sisters in community, the School Sisters of Notre Dame and SSND Associates. She was preceded in death by her parents, Leo and Mary (Ehlers) Gosse.

In a 2018 Jubilee reflection, she wrote: "As I traveled through 60 years of religious life, I became aware of the friends I made. In these relationships, God was important and remains important in our lives. Thank you, God, for choosing me to follow you."

*By Sister Mary Kay Ash, SSND*