



**Birth**  
Oct. 19, 1940

**Baptism**  
Nov. 10, 1940

**Profession**  
Jan. 28, 1961

**Death**  
Dec. 9, 2016

**Burial**  
Notre Dame of  
Elm Grove Cemetery  
Elm Grove, Wisconsin

*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 Catherine (Kay) Jarema, SSND

**B**orn Oct. 19, 1940 in Grand Rapids, Michigan, to William and Frances (Juchniewicz) Jarema, she was baptized Mary Catherine at St. Adalbert Church, Grand Rapids. She was the oldest of five children. Kay received her elementary education at the parish school and was taught by the School Sisters of Notre Dame whom she admired for their dedication.

Her desire to be a nun led Kay to enter the SSND aspiranture at St. Mary's Academy in Prairie du Chien, Wisconsin. In 1958, upon completing high school, she entered the postulancy at the new motherhouse – Our Lady of the Lake, Mequon, Wisconsin. Received as a novice in 1959, Kay was given the religious name, Jean Vianney. Years later, she returned to her baptismal name. On Jan. 28, 1961, she professed her first vows. She received a bachelor's degree in French at Mount Mary College, Milwaukee in 1967 and earned a master's degree in religious studies at Mundelein College, Chicago in 1976.

As a School Sister of Notre Dame, she was called and sent to a wide variety of places and situations, bringing her many gifts and touching many lives. Sister Kay's ministries of teaching, pastoral ministry and spiritual direction encompassed more than 50 years. She taught at Christ the King, Wauwatosa, Wisconsin; Holy Angels, Gary, Indiana; West Catholic High School, Grand Rapids, Michigan; and East Catholic High School, Detroit.

During her years as a pastoral minister, she served at St. Anthony, Detroit; Our Lady Help of Christians, Saginaw, Michigan; SS. Peter and Paul, Merrillville, Indiana; St. John Nepomuc, Milwaukee; St. Augustine, Milwaukee; St. Vincent de Paul, Fort Wayne, Indiana; and St. Ann Roman Catholic Mission, Manchester, Kentucky. Sister Kay directed the SSND Lay Volunteers Program for the former Milwaukee Province for six years.

Sister Kay was gifted with the trait of perseverance which some might call stubbornness. Give her a project and she would see it through to the end. She was a problem solver. Kay demonstrated this attribute with her organizational skills. When she ministered in the largest parish in Fort Wayne, Indiana, she introduced small faith communities.

Among her many gifts was her creativity – adapting and using her talents in various ways. She had the courage to step out and do things that others would wait to see how it went first. Besides using her artistic talents in the classroom, Kay designed brochures, made banners and wrote for the School Sister quarterly publication. During the time of the Tri-State region, she researched, produced and distributed a newsletter, wrote news releases and articles covering activities of the Grand Rapids Sisters' Council and prepared text and artwork for the Catholic Information Center in Grand Rapids. In her later years, Kay's artistic gifts were often shared with community members and friends.

In 2009, she entered into the ministry of spiritual direction and retreat facilitation. Her "Moving Within" ministry placed a special focus upon

*continued*

# In Loving Memory



*Sister Kay Jarema*



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servicing those who are unemployed. She noted the importance of “keeping our balance in hard times and keeping faith that God is with us, even in pain.”

Kay trusted me with being her power of attorney (POA) and we went together to many appointments with the oncologist. Dr. Cheng was one of most compassionate and patient doctors I have met. Kay would come to the appointment with three pages of questions and concerns single spaced and he would go through each of them. I always took notes so we could work together.

Kay left specific directions for her funeral and other matters. We have been able to follow them. Here are some of her reflections dated May 13, 1995.

“In the mystery of anyone’s life there is too much to capture in one celebration. I celebrate many themes:

- + Trusting Jesus in the storm all the times I felt called to ‘walk on the water to him.’
- + Knowing more and more deeply ‘Look at the birds of the air. Aren’t you more precious than...’
- + ‘Follow the STAR in you; it will certainly lead you to Jesus.’  
– Blessed Theresa
- + In trust I have learned of Jesus accepting me.”

Kay had the pioneer spirit of our Mother Caroline in many ways. She especially shared that spirit through:

- Small community living in Grand Rapids
- Intergenerational community living in Saginaw
- Creating senior adult programs in the parish
- Founding and directing the SSND Lay Volunteers (SSNDLV) program
- Leading the Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults (RCIA) in the parish
- Her latest dream was to offer spiritual direction and retreats to economically poor folks. She did that while coping with liver cancer.

In July, she joined the SSND community at Notre Dame of Elm Grove, Wisconsin, where she continued to serve through prayer and presence. Sister Mary Catherine (Kay) Jarema died at age 76 on Dec. 9, 2016 at Notre Dame of Elm Grove. She is survived by her brothers Stanley and Daniel and her sister Camille (David) Gregory, loving extended family, friends and the SSND Community. She was preceded in death by her parents William and Frances, and her brother Richard.

Kay, you were there for me in 2003 when my last family member was dying and I am grateful I could be here for you as your SSND sister and friend. A FRIEND IS A LIFETIME TREASURE. Thank you Kay for being my friend.

*This remembrance is compiled from SSND archival information and the eulogy presented by Sister Phyllis Marie Grzeczka, SSND*