



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

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
May 10, 2017

**Mary Leonelle Schiferl, SSND  
Teacher, Community Leader**

**Elm Grove Wis.** – Sister Mary Leonelle, 95, died May 5, 2017. Born Florence Schiferl, on August 21, 1921 to Anna and Albert Schiferl in the town of Hewitt, Wisconsin, Sister Mary Leonelle was the youngest of 10 children. She had eight older siblings, four boys and four girls, Sister Mary Leonelle quipped in her autobiography, “If you surmise that I was a spoiled child, you guessed it right.”



At just a year-and-a-half, her mother became very ill and died. With the help of maternal grandparents and the care of her oldest sister, Anna, their father managed to care for their family and the family farm during trying circumstances. Sister Mary Leonelle also noted that, “we were taught to share our gifts, more by example than by words. Produce from our garden and orchard were not only for the Schiferls, but also for our neighbors, including, of course, the Notre Dame Sisters and the priests. In addition, every time Dad would butcher an animal, the meat would be shared with others.”

She professed first vows in August of 1941, and was missioned to teach at Holy Angels in Gary, Indiana. She continued ministry in education in Wisconsin at Holy Name in Sheboygan; St. Philip in Reed City; Immaculate Heart in West Allis; Holy Angels in West Bend; St. Killan in Campbellsport; St. James in Mequon; St. Philip in Rudolph and St. Mary Czestochowa in Milwaukee.

Sister Mary Leonelle received a B.A. from Mount Mary University in Milwaukee and a master’s in educational counseling and guidance from Marquette University. She taught for 28 years and served as an elementary school administrator for 15 years. She also served in administering medical records and parish ministry. God called her to leadership at Notre Dame of the Lake in Mequon, Wisconsin, from 1969 until 1973 and again in 1975 until 1983.

She served on Provincial Council during the trying periods of the move of the Milwaukee Motherhouse to Notre Dame of the Lake, in Mequon, Wisconsin to Marshall Street in Milwaukee and the relocation of sisters. Sister Mary Leonelle finished her autobiography with a quote from scripture writing, “‘make your home in me, as I make my home in you,’ has meant very much to me, all my life.” She is survived by nieces, nephews, dear friends and the SSND community. She was preceded in death by her parents, her brothers Winand, Ray, Leo, Herb, Ed and her sisters Anna, S. Ann Therese, SSND and Tina Schopin. Memorial contributions may be made to the School Sisters of Notre Dame Retirement Fund, c/o Resource Development, 13105 Watertown Plank Road, Elm Grove, WI 53122 or online at [www.ssndcentralpacific.org/Partner/Donation](http://www.ssndcentralpacific.org/Partner/Donation).

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