

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Sister Elise Diemert, SSND

March 10, 1916 – April 12, 2018



Sister Elise died on April 12, 2018 at Notre Dame Convent, Waterdown, Ontario. She reached 102 in March. She was in her 84th year as a SSND.

Adela was born on March 10, 1916, the third youngest of a family of 12. Her farm home was near the hamlet, Deemerton. She received her elementary education at a one-room school, known as the “mosquito” school, located in a nearby bush. It was there she discovered a library book on the Little Flower of Jesus. St. Therese’s life inspired her to become a nun. She felt that she could do little things even though she had suffered from polio at age five.

Adela learned that the Canadian Motherhouse had opened in 1927. After Grade 8, at the age of 13 she entered the aspiranture. When she was accepted into postulancy, she remembered the words of Mother Baptist Klein, Provincial Superior “If you do not turn out as a GOOD Sister we will never accept one so young again”. In 1933 she became Novice M. Elise and professed her vows in 1934.

Sister Elise began her teaching career at Holy Family School, Hamilton, St. Patrick=s and St. Clement=s in Cambridge.

She attained her Bachelor of Arts Degree from McMaster University, Hamilton in 1950. The following year she acquired her High School Assistant Certificate. In 1959 she was certified as a Commercial Specialist.

She taught mainly commercial subjects at St. Mary=s High School, Kitchener and Notre Dame Academy, Waterdown.

From 1962-1968 Sister Elise served on the Provincial Council of the Canadian Province where she applied her commercial skills as secretary and bookkeeper. In addition, she was Directress of the Junior Sisters.

Sister Elise moved to Saskatchewan in 1968 where she was principal of Handel Public High School. On her return to Ontario she was assigned as principal first at St. Teresa

School, then at St. Anthony Daniel School, Kitchener.

In August 1973 her niece died suddenly leaving a two month old baby boy and three young girls, the oldest age five. The father, a dairy farmer, had family in Holland. The baby and toddler were cared for by godparents who lived a distance from the family. To assist the depressed father, Sister Elise spent weekends and holidays with them and periodically brought the younger ones home to reunite with the family. After three years Sister realized that she could no longer do justice to both ministries. The father attempted to get a live-in homemaker, but to no avail. Sister Elise felt that the family needed to be together. After much prayer and consultation with superiors, she applied for an exclaustation. In June 1976 she took up residence with the family. From 1983 – 1987 Sister Elise spent part time with the family and part time living in community.

Sister Elise's commercial skills again were put to use when in 1985, she helped the Teeswater and Mildmay parishes with their financial records. She, also, facilitated Bible Study discussion groups and assisted with the Diocesan Parish Family Religion program.

Upon retiring to Waterdown, ever the educator, Sister Elise assisted with the Catechetical Correspondence program for several years.

Sister Elise's 100th birthday celebration was a joyous occasion for her, her community and many nieces and nephews.

Attending daily Mass was important to Sister Elise. She eagerly awaited to be taken to the chapel in her wheelchair.

Mass of Christian Burial for Sister Elise was celebrated on April 16 at Notre Dame Convent Chapel. The main celebrant and homilist was Rev. Michael Lehman CSB, her grandnephew. Concelebrants were Rev. Pablito, Labado, chaplain, Rev. Edward Hinsperger and Rev. Michael Downey. In his homily, Father Lehman made several references to Sister Elise as "the little person with a big heart". Her numerous nieces and nephews attended the funeral liturgy. A poignant moment in the liturgy occurred as the four adult- children for whom she cared, took up the offertory gifts.

To quote from our You Are Sent, Constitution #4, "*....we are sent to make Christ visible by our very being, by sharing our love, faith and hope.*" Throughout her life Sister Elise made Christ visible by sharing her love, faith and hope.