



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
Jul 18, 2017

**Mary Louise Van Straten, SSND  
Teacher, Administrator**

**Elm Grove, Wis.** – Sister Mary Louise Van Straten, 100, died June 28, 2017. She was born Charlotte Marie Van Straten on June 5, 1917, in the Town of DePere, Wisconsin, now known as Ledgeview. Her parents, Louise De Cleene and Peter John Van Straten, were also born there.

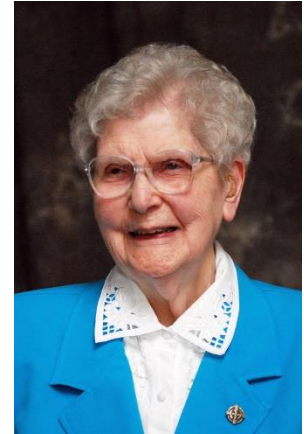
She wrote in her autobiography, “I experienced God’s love for me, from my earliest years, through the love of mom and dad and others in the family.” She had two brothers: one the oldest in the family and the other the youngest. In between were six girls Mary Louise was the youngest.

She attended Catholic school and was nurtured by the deep faith of her family. Sister Mary Louise had four sisters who were also SSNDs: Hilaire, Jositha, Petronia and Mary Conrad. She made the fifth and they referred to themselves as “sister sisters.” She professed first vows in 1937. She received a degree in history with a minor in English from Mount Mary College in Milwaukee, and in 1974, she earned a master’s in mathematics from Clarke College in Dubuque, Iowa.

Sister Mary Louise spent 40 years teaching in a classroom. She began with teaching elementary school, including 10 years at St. Michael in Milwaukee from 1937 through 1947. Later teaching roles in Wisconsin took her to Green Bay, Madison and Glen Haven, where she devoted nine years to students at St. Mary. She served as a teacher in the Diocese of La Crosse throughout the 1960s, and returned to Green Bay area schools during the 1970s. In 1978, Sister Mary Louise began four years of full-time ministry as coordinator of religious education at All Saints parish in Gladstone, Michigan. She followed with seven years’ service as a full-time secretary at Sacred Heart Grade School in Appleton.

Sister Mary Louise celebrated her 100th birthday on June 5, 2017, in a community celebration with a packed room of sisters, staff and several generations of family in attendance. She was also a jubilarian celebrating 80 years in 2017. She wrote in her jubilee reflection, “The best part of being a religious woman is being able to live with other women who share my values and help me to grow daily into Christ-like living. Even if I could do nothing, my very being is my doing. I give praise to God just by being who I am.”

She is survived by nieces, nephews, dear friends and the SSND Community. Preceded in death her parents, five sisters and two brothers. 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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