

**Sister Kathleen Reichert, OP**  
**Born to earthly life: March 2, 1943**  
**Religious profession: August 15, 1965**  
**Entered eternal life: April 19, 2015**



*Go into the whole world  
and proclaim the gospel to every creature.*

*Mark 16:15*



*Baby Kathy*

Kathleen Ann, born on March 2, 1943, was the first of the four daughters of Grace M. Verber and William J. Reichert of Racine. The family were longtime members of Saint Joseph Parish, where Kathy was baptized and attended grade school before going on to Saint Catherine's High School. On September 8, 1962, after a year at Dominican College, she joined the community of her Racine Dominican teachers.

On August 16, 1963, she received the Dominican habit and the name Sister Eva Marie of the Immaculate Conception. She pronounced her first vows on August 15, 1965. In 1968 she returned to the use of her baptismal name, Kathleen. Most folks would call her Kathy.



Kathy was a lover of learning. From the beginning of her postulancy, she had studied at Dominican College and, at the end of her Juniorate year at the motherhouse, was awarded her baccalaureate degree with a major in French. All her life she would be an avid reader, a legacy from her mother.

After her Juniorate, in the fall of 1966, Sister Kathy had been assigned to teach seventh grade at Saint Edward's School in Racine.



*First Communion, 1951*



*Eighth Grade Graduation*



*Postulant, 1962*

The following year she moved to Nativity High School in Detroit, where she taught French, English, and religion for three years. Meanwhile, she went on studying French at Millersville State College in Millersville, Pennsylvania during the summers, and would receive her master's degree from there in 1975.

In 1970, when Racine Dominicans

began to choose their own places of ministry and residence, Kathy moved back to Racine, living with a small group of sisters in the old convent in Holy Name Parish and teaching French and English at Saint Catherine's High School.



*Reception Day, 1963*



*Final Profession to S. Suzanne Noffke, 1973*

She made her final profession on August 16, 1973. (A few years earlier, individual sisters had begun to set their own profession dates and design their own profession celebrations in dialogue with community leadership.)

As the years passed, Kathy suffered increasingly from arthritis. In 1978, as it became more and more difficult for her to navigate the long corridors and stairs at the high school, she moved to Siena Center but went on teaching at Saint Catherine's.

Reputedly a demanding teacher, *Ma Soeur* ("my Sister"), as Kathy was known to students of French, was deeply loved for her knowledge, concern, creativity, and discipline. Melody, one of Kathy's students for four years of French as well as advanced composition, spoke through tears at Kathy's Remembering Service of her



*Paris, 1977*

“dedicated and caring teacher” who didn’t quit at the end of a school day. She was available to students whenever they needed her. “I will always remember *ma Soeur* and her kindness,” Melody said. She led student trips to France and shared her love for the French language and culture in the classroom.

Over the years, Kathy taught more than five thousand students, recording the name of every single one in her special notebooks. While settling into her room at Siena Center recently after extended rehabilitation at Lakeshore Manor, she couldn’t find one of those notebooks. Searching everywhere, she was unsettled until, with her sister’s help, the notebook finally was discovered.



*Teaching French at SCHS, about 1990*



*With S. Jean Verber in the Card Shop, 2011*

Kathy retired from teaching in 2008, and the following year took charge of the Siena Center Card Shop in addition to working at the reception desk. Retreatants who talked with her would return a year later to find she not only remembered them and what they had talked about but even the type of cards they liked. Her welcoming

manner and ability to listen compassionately made people feel special.

Appreciated for her no-nonsense style (“You always knew where you stood with her!”), professional excellence, and caring approach, Kathy touched many in a variety of ways. Her niece Meghan fondly remembered childhood summer days spent at Windhover, as well as the cards and letters Kathy had so faithfully sent. “My kids have gotten to know her through her letters,” Meghan noted. When Sister Agnes Johnson was serving in Thailand in 1980, she deeply appreciated that Kathy had written regularly, keeping her connected to Racine. She did the same for any sister serving far from Racine, said her cousin Sister Jean Verber. “Kathy was the anchor for our family who brought us back together,” her youngest sister, Mary Jo, reflected.

For years Kathy could be seen day after day working out on a stationary bicycle, though her days



*S. Celia Evers makes a purchase in the Card Shop, 2011*

were otherwise spent in a wheelchair. In December of 2014, she moved to Lakeshore Manor, where she participated in physical therapy to the extent that she was able. But her health gradually deteriorated. In early April of 2015 she was becoming increasingly weaker and more confused. A urinary tract infection did not respond to antibiotic treatment, and over the next several days her condition worsened until, on the evening of April 19, about 7:30, she went home to God. Her sister

Carol and her cousin Sister Jean Verber were with her, as were Sisters Judene Walsh and Rosalie Lauer and the community's health service director, Pam Hudson.

Her funeral was celebrated on the afternoon of April 25, with her sisters Carol (Joseph) Svatora, Kristine (Cesar) Salgado, and Mary Jo (Joseph) Filbrandt, and all of her nieces and nephews in attendance along with many Racine Dominican sisters and associates.

She lies at rest in the community plot in Holy Cross Cemetery in Caledonia.



*Silver Jubilee, 1990*