

Sister Gertrude Geigle, OP



Born to Earthly Life on June 20, 1920
First Profession on August 4, 1938
Entered Eternal Life on August 28, 2023

GERTRUDE TERESA GEIGLE was born on June 20, 1920 in Kaukauna, WI to John and Margaret Giegle. She was the third of eight children in a family of deep faith. She attended Catholic grade school and her family home was across from the rectory, so she described her childhood as being full of “wonderful, holy people.”

Gertrude often said she always felt that God had something special for her in mind. She felt the call to religious life early. After talking with one of her teachers at Holy Cross, who was a Racine Dominican, she realized that that call was to be a Racine Dominican Sister. She made her first profession on August 4, 1938 and final vows on August 5, 1944 and was given the name S. Ambrose.

S. Gertrude received her Bachelor’s Degree from St. Norbert’s College in DePere, WI, and Masters Degrees from Xavier College in Chicago, IL and Aquinas College in Grand Rapids, MI. She was a teacher and principal for 34 years in schools throughout Wisconsin and Michigan, including St. Patrick and St. Rose in Racine, WI and St. Louis in Caledonia, WI. She found the most rewarding part of education was the relationships she continued with her students long after they left the classroom.

It was at her last school in Fowler, Michigan where she found herself called to parish life and religious education. While teaching during the week, she and several Sisters would spend time on the weekends ministering at a parish. She loved the energy of parish life and relished this new way to share her faith. S. Gertrude worked in many areas, including religious education, catechist training, pastoral ministry and parish leadership for more than 31 years.

In addition to her parish work, she gave her time to help the underserved throughout the US and Mexico. She spent summers as a volunteer with the Latin American Mission Program (LAMP) in Matamores, Mexico and as a teacher Harlem, NY and Manifee, CA. She worked with the Hmong people in Eau Claire and with Latin communities in La Joya, Texas. These experiences of different cultures, places, parishes and dioceses fed her missionary spirit and gave her unique perspective on the justice issues faced by so many.

Early in her religious life, she lived by what she called the three S’s – Silence, Solitude and Simplicity. As she matured in faith and in her pursuit of mission, she added a fourth – Service, Silence, Solitude and Simplicity.

S. Gertrude was the first Racine Dominican to reach 85 years as a professed Sister and lived until the age of 103. Her long life gave her wisdom that she shared with many. She said “aging has been a real blessing. It has given me time to appreciate the gift of life. God knows what he has prepared for me.”

In her 103 years of life, S. Gertrude had an impact on many people through teaching and through her faith. Thank you S. Gert for your powerful witness of God’s love.

