

# **Sister Dorothy Ann Reppen (Sister M. Serena), CSC**

October 12, 1922–April 9, 2018

---

**These memories were shared by Sister Suzanne Patterson, CSC, at the funeral on April 12, 2018.**

In 2004, Sister Dorothy Ann left specific instructions for her funeral. She stated, “Please make my funeral a joyful occasion with lots of love and laughter. Thank you very much. Love to all.” Today we will remember her with much love.

Dorothy Ann was born October 12, 1922, in Bocabel, Wisconsin. She was the fourth of the 10 children of Joseph Reppen and Aurelia Morrissey. Her brother Robert was a Norbertine priest, and her sister, Judith, was Sister Margaretta, a Sister of the Holy Cross. She loved her family dearly, visited them when she was able and celebrated her diamond jubilee with 25 family members.

Dorothy Ann attended Saint Peter’s School in Stevens Point, Wisconsin, and completed high school at St. Mary’s Academy. She entered the Congregation on February 10, 1940, while in her senior year of high school. Sisters Hildegardis, Ildephonse and Francis Catherine, as well as a St. Agnes Sister who taught her in the sixth grade, influenced her vocation greatly.

She spent 35 years in elementary education as a teacher and principal in Catholic schools throughout the Midwest. Soon after leaving her first love of teaching Sister Dorothy Ann began a 15-year ministry with Renew, Inc. in South Bend, Indiana. The non-profit organization was chartered to provide low-income housing through a program of rehabilitation of existing housing with a goal of eventual home ownership. Sister’s role as assistant director and bookkeeper was very satisfying for her.

She was definitely a people person and loved her students, co-workers and all with whom she interacted and served. How she loved parties! Sister Dorothy Ann was in charge of planning family reunions for many years. She could turn a simple trip to Dairy Queen into a celebration. She loved to drive a car and enjoyed taking sisters shopping and on short trips. She and Sister Sheila spent many a pleasant afternoon shopping and running errands.

Among her treasured memories are two trips she took to the Holy Land and France. She enjoyed short trips to St. Joseph and Lakeside in Michigan for many years. She enjoyed Lake Michigan and the peacefulness of the water. She also loved going to Hannah's Restaurant for a wonderful Sunday brunch with housemates Sheila, Maureen Minihane, Katherine and Albertine.

She also loved to play cards, was a wonderful conversationalist and had many good friends. She and Sister M. Albertine played Scrabble and the card game Hand and Foot every Saturday for 15 years. They would start early and stay late!

She inherited from her father the ability to come up with quick and humorous responses. They were both noted for telling stories that ended with a hearty laugh. She was fun-loving and always had a good pun ready for any occasion. She was the best punster around.

Sister Dorothy Ann's appreciation of life, even in her last years as she was more confined due to her health, never left her. It was a privilege to be with her, and to assist her in any way because her sense of humor, her gratitude, and her love of life never left her.

I have one last story to share. At the celebration of Sister Dorothy Ann's 75th jubilee, Sister Suzanne Brennan shared with Dorothy that she has a friend who was born in the same town as Dorothy was. Suzanne couldn't remember the name of the town, so she asked Dorothy where she was born. Dorothy's reply was classic Dorothy Ann. "If I knew I'd tell you!" A moment of memory loss was nothing to bother her and that is exactly how Dorothy dealt with life! She lived life fully and never complained about the turns in the road as she aged and faced physical and mental disability. We never heard her complain about anything.

Those who lived with Sister Dorothy Ann, worked with her or were friends with her appreciated her sense of humor and love of life. We will carry it with us always. Rest in Peace Dorothy. We love you.

*Written by Sister Suzanne Patterson, CSC*