

IN MEMORIAM



Sr. Dorothy Schmitmeyer

(Sister M. Donald)

BORN: March 1934

ENTERED CONGREGATION: August 30, 1951

DIED: April 14, 2016

We gather today to celebrate the life of our dear Sister Dorothy Schmitmeyer, a devoted Sister of the Precious Blood for 64 years.

Dorothy Mathilda was born in March 1934 to Leander Schmitmeyer and Elizabeth (Elsie) Enneking. She grew up on a farm east of Minster, Ohio where God came first and hard work and lots of family fun was just part of living. Dorothy is survived by one Sister Martha and two brothers Jerry and Donald, her twin. Her brother Roger died this past January, 2016. Dorothy attended Minster High School for two years and then completed her high school at Precious Blood in Dayton, Ohio.

At the age of 17, she entered the Postulate on August 30, 1951. On August 15, 1954 when Dorothy made her vows and received her religious habit, she was given the name Sister Mary Donald. Her ministry took her to St. Mary's, Ohio, Manteca, California, Vandalia, Ohio and then from 1966 to 2014, she served as a missionary in Chile with the exception of seven years, 1980-1987, when she served in community leadership. Due to illness, Dorothy returned to the states in 2014 so that she would not impede her sisters from doing their missionary work. After living at Salem Heights for a number of months, Dorothy moved to the Maria Joseph Center to receive additional care.

I would now like to share with you a special tribute to Dorothy written by the Sisters in Chile ... Maria Luisa, Edna, Noemí and Rita with whom she shared so many happy years together.

— **Sister Cecilia Taphorn**

**Sister Dorothy Schmitmeyer
A Tribute**

A giant oak has fallen and her fall rever-

berates in Chile and in the United States. A great woman has gone to be united forever in the oneness of God and all being. Sister Dorothy Schmitmeyer was a tall stately woman with beautiful blue eyes that reflected her interior beauty; with a contagious smile and a laugh that reflected her joy of life and living.

Like the oak tree with its deep roots, she was a woman of profound faith, deeply rooted in God and in Precious Blood Spirituality. She shared freely her love of the Lord and our oneness in the Lord. It was this profound love and trust in the Lord that enabled her to live eight and a half years with cancer with such grace and openness. It was this faith and love which enabled her to companion so many religious men and women as well as laity in their spiritual journey.

Dorothy brought people together just as the oak is able to with its long limbs to provide shade and shelter for many. She loved community, the sharing in community, the working together with others. She had the heart of a mother and she was always caring for those she loved — her family, her community, her sisters in Chile, her sisters in Salem Heights. She had a welcoming spirit that enabled her to reach out to the rich and the poor alike. In Chile she worked with the sons of some of the wealthy families and in her later years she worked with teens who had problems with the law and by court order lived in a home sponsored by a not for profit organization.

The sturdy oak was a leader with organizational skills that lead her to be a principal in the USA and in Chile, to work in formation within our Congregation and with women and men in formation in other Congregations, to be coordinator of the Vicariate in Chile a number of times, and to be called to leadership within the congregation as councilor and vice-president. Her intuitive and visionary capacities enabled her to invite us to continue to grow, to

change, and to be open to new possibilities. This visionary ability lead her to begin to give the enneagram with Sister Noemí to religious and laity, to encourage the three Precious Blood congregations in Chile to study and promote Precious Blood spirituality, to encourage the three congregations to invite Fr. David Kelly and Sister Donna Liette to give the circle training in Chile even though she herself was not well enough to participate.

Her visionary ability reminds one of the tallness of an oak which gives a broad view. Maybe this made her a lover of creation, especially of plants and flowers. At Salem Heights she also became a bird lover, enjoying the daily visit of the cardinals. From the Alturas Dorothy had a cosmic vision possibly influenced by Meister Eckhart.

What would an oak tree be without its acorns! Dorothy produced much fruit during her sixty-four years in religious life and during her forty years of service to the people of God in Chile. Many, many people have her love, compassion, listening ear, wisdom, advice, courage, etc. stored in their hearts and live their lives inspired by her sharing.

No oak, no matter how strong and tall lives forever. No oak lives without being battered by wind and rain, ice and snow, lightning strikes and disease. She too knew pain and suffering — hers and others; she knew disease — the cancer that slowly took her strength away. But like the giant oak she accepted what came her way and showed us how to live and love with illness, how to continue to be for others, to share wisdom and to enjoy life.

A giant oak has been taken from us, but we know her spirit will continue to companion us in the days ahead.

Written by Sisters Maria Luisa Miller, Edna Hess, Noemí Flores and Rita Manriquez