

Sister Donna Gottschalk, CSA

Sister Donna Gottschalk, CSA, formerly Sister Philip, died peacefully November 2, 2022, at St. Francis Home, Fond du Lac, Wisconsin.

Donna Marie was born in La Crosse, Kansas, on May 6, 1940. She was the first daughter after eight sons born to Philip Gottschalk and Lidwina Werth Gottschalk. Following Donna, three more boys and two girls made the family of fourteen complete. Donna spent her childhood keeping up with her brothers, doing farm and household chores, and learning very fast how to play baseball and football with the best. When Donna was six, the family moved to Hays, Kansas, to fulfill her parents' desire for their children to have a Catholic education. In grade school and high school,

Donna was taught by the Sisters of St. Agnes. From early on she wanted to be just like the sisters. After high school, Donna, still undecided about pursuing her desire to be a sister, attended the College of Mount St. Scholastica in Atchison, Kansas, taught by the Sisters of St. Benedict. In 1959, after her first year of college, Donna made the decision to enter St. Agnes Convent. Even though she missed the wheat fields of Kansas and the life she shared with her family, her call to religious life beckoned her to Wisconsin and CSA. She made her first profession of vows as Sister Philip in the Congregation of Sisters of St. Agnes on August 15, 1962, in Fond du Lac, Wisconsin.

Sister Donna earned a BS in Elementary Education from Marian College, Fond du Lac, Wisconsin, in 1964. Sister taught primary grades in Wisconsin, Pennsylvania, and Kansas for thirty-one years. She loved teaching and working with children, and they loved her and filled her heart with many happy memories. During her years as an educator, she enriched her teaching and religious education skills with several courses and seminars at Ft. Hays State University, Hays, Kansas and at Silver Lake College, Manitowoc, Wisconsin.

In 1993, Sister Donna retired from teaching. After a year of sabbatical in Rock Haven, Missouri, in 1994, she engaged in a variety of ministries including serving on the parish team of Sacred Heart Parish in Colby, Kansas, and cooking for the residents at St. John's New Horizons Assisted Living, Hays, Kansas. In 1998, Sister Donna returned to Fond du Lac as an assistant to the Local Coordinators for the CSA retirement community at Nazareth Court and Center. She spent countless hours providing for the needs of the sisters, shopping for them, driving, baking, preparing special meals and filling the sisters' days with her caring and attentive presence and support. In 2018, a serious illness caused Sister Donna to resign her position. Unable to serve the sisters as before, she herself became a



resident at Nazareth Court and Center and later at St. Francis Home where she received loving care until the time of her death.

Throughout her life, Sister Donna cherished her life in CSA and her Kansas roots. Her love for life, for her CSA sisters, for her family and friends, for the wheat fields, for the smell of the land and for all creation remained strong as did her special hobbies of cooking, baking, and cheering on the Green Bay Packers.

Preceding Sister Donna in death were her parents; her brothers Father Andrew Gottschalk, OSB, Vernon, Ivan, Cecil, Philip, Floyd, Stephen; her sister Helen (Ron) Legleiter.

Sister is survived by her brothers Donald (Theresa), Leon, Father David, OFM, Cap., Andrew (Lena); her sister Raeann (Charles) Suppes; her sisters-in-law, Dorothy (Cecil) Gottschalk, Nita (Ivan) Gottschalk, Bernadette (Philip) Gottschalk; her devoted nieces and nephews, and the Sisters of St. Agnes with whom she lived, prayed, and ministered.

Visitation will be held at Nazareth Court and Center, 375 Gillett Street, Fond du Lac, Wisconsin, from 9:00—11:00 a.m. and from 12:00—1:30 p.m. on Tuesday, November 8, 2022.

A prayer service will be held at 11:00 a.m. on Tuesday, November 8, 2022, in the Nazareth Center Chapel. Please check in for the Visitation and Prayer Service at the 375 Gillett Street entrance only.

The Liturgy of Christian Burial for Sister Donna will be held on Tuesday, November 8, 2022, at 2:00 p.m. in St. Francis Home Chapel, 33 Everett Street, Fond du Lac, Wisconsin, with Tom Zelinski, OFM Cap., presiding.

Additional services will be held in Kansas at a date to be determined with burial following in a family plot in Hays.

Memorials may be directed to the CSA Mission Advancement Office, 320 County Road K, Fond du Lac, WI 54937.

The Sisters of St. Agnes are grateful to the nurses and staff of Nazareth Court and Center, St. Francis Home, and Hospice Hope for their care of Sister Donna.

Zacherl Funeral Home is serving the Congregation of Sisters of St. Agnes.