

## **Sister Judith Schmidt, CSA**

Sister Judith Schmidt, CSA, baptized Gladys Joan, died peacefully September 10, 2021, at St. Francis Home, Fond du Lac, Wisconsin.

Gladys was born April 13, 1934, in Catherine, Kansas, the oldest of seven children of Felix Schmidt and Angela Beilman Schmidt. Gladys grew up immersed in farm life among the Volga German community in Catherine. She attended Girls Catholic High School in Hays, Kansas, where she continued being taught by the Sisters of St. Agnes. After graduation from high school in 1952, Gladys entered St. Agnes Convent. She made her profession of vows in the Congregation of Sisters of St. Agnes as Sister Judith on August 15, 1955, in Fond du Lac, Wisconsin.

Sister Judith received her BS in Elementary Education from Marian College of Fond du Lac in 1962, and, in 1971, her MS in Educational Administration from Marygrove College, Detroit, Michigan. She taught in elementary schools in Wisconsin including six years as principal and teacher at St. Bernard's School, Watertown, Wisconsin. In 1969, she was appointed Apostolic Councilor for the congregation, assisting in educational planning and personnel placement for CSA. Following this term of service, Sister Judith was the principal of Immaculate Conception Grade School, Elmhurst, Illinois, from 1975–1977.

In 1977, Sister Judith was elected General Superior of the Congregation, a position she held until 1985. She helped lead the community through the many changes in religious life that resulted from the Second Vatican Council.

Upon completing her role as General Superior, Sister Judith attended the University of Wisconsin, Madison, taking courses in Adult Education and Governance in Higher Education. In the fall of 1986, she joined the education department at Marian College of Fond du Lac, guiding student teachers and assisting with the evening adult education programs. In 1987, she was appointed the first Vice President of Development for Marian, a position she held for ten years. In her final years at Marian, she served as Vice President for Community Relations and Mission.

In July 2008, Sister Judith became the first President of the combined St. Mary's Springs High School and FACES System now known as St. Mary's Springs Academy, Pre-K–12. She proudly served in this position until July 2011. In appreciation for her legacy of leadership and commitment to Marian University and St. Mary's Springs Academy, an admission award for SMSA graduates enrolling in Marian was named the Sister Judith Schmidt Award.

Sister Judith was beloved in the Fond du Lac community as an educational and civic leader, as a board member for several organizations serving those in need, and for fostering the expansion of the arts and music in the city. In June 2016, Sister Judith joined the community of sisters residing at Nazareth Court and Center in Fond du Lac. Frail health led her to move to St. Francis Home in 2020 where she received loving care until the time of her death.

Sister Judith was preceded in death by her parents Felix and Angela Schmidt, her brother Thomas, and her sisters Inez Schmidt (infant), Phyllis Schmidt, and Pamela Shaffer.



She is survived by her sisters Marla (Dennis) Staab and Donna Schmidt (Duane Coyle); her brother-in-law Warren Shaffer and her sister-in-law Doris Schmidt; nieces and nephews, many dear friends, and the Sisters of St. Agnes with whom she lived, prayed, and ministered.

Private funeral services will be held on Tuesday, September 21, 2021, with Father Kenneth Smits, Capuchin, presiding. Services will include a Prayer Service at 11:00 a.m. and the Liturgy of Christian Burial at 2:00 p.m. To receive a link for livestreaming of the services on September 21, please call St. Agnes Convent, 920-907-2300, between 8:00 a.m. and 4:30 p.m. by September 20.

Cremation will take place following the services. Burial will be at St. Joseph Springs Cemetery, Fond du Lac, Wisconsin, at a later date.

A public Celebration of Sister Judith's Life will be held at a future date.

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 Judith in her final years.

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