



Name: Sister Thelma Wiese (Sister Bede)
Date of Birth: April 28, 1936
Place of Birth: Lindsay, Nebraska
Parents: Henry Joseph and Rose Seraphim (Borer) Wiese
Religious Profession: August 15, 1954
Date of Death: March 19, 2019
Age: 82
Years Professed: 64

Wake Reflection by Sister Natalie Binversie, Community Director

Thelma Anastasia Wiese was the eleventh child born to Henry Joseph and Rose Seraphim (Borer) Wiese on April 28, 1936 in Lindsay, Nebraska. She was baptized the next day, April 29th at Holy Family Church in Lindsay. Thelma was confirmed there on April 30, 1947.

Thelma grew up on the family farm in Lindsay. Her parents had deep faith, which was passed on to her, to her seven brothers and three sisters. Thelma attended Holy Family Grade School, where she was taught by the Franciscan Sisters of Christian Charity. From the time that she was small, Thelma was attracted to the Sisters. She especially liked the homemaker, Sister Mauricia Van Dyke. Thelma would often run over to watch Sister hang the wash on the clothesline. Thelma decided that this was her vocational call, to be a Sister homemaker. Sister Berdelle Wiese, her Dad's sister, was also a member of the Community who influenced Thelma's decision. Other relatives in the Community were her cousins, Sister Mary Eileen and Sister Dorelia Hegemann.

When Thelma was in the 8th Grade, she planned to leave home and enter Holy Family Convent after graduation. Her parents and family supported this decision. She was accepted and entered the Convent on August 24, 1949. Thelma completed her High School studies at Holy Family Academy in 1953. When Thelma was received into the Novitiate, June 13, 1953, she received the name, Sister Bede. After Vatican Council II, she made the decision to return to her baptismal name and was known from then on as Sister Thelma.

Sister Thelma continued her education at Holy Family College. In 1961 she earned a Bachelor's Degree with a Major in Math and a Minor in Chemistry. In 1970 she received a Master of Art's Degree in the Teaching of Math from the University of Detroit. By the time she was finishing her college classes, the idea of being a homemaker was replaced with being a teacher. Each mission on which she served, had its own blessings, because of the Sisters she lived with, as well as the students and their families. Even though Sister Thelma was teaching, she considered herself to be a student, always open to learning from the people who came into her life.

Sister Thelma loved teaching. This is affirmed in the annual formal teacher evaluation. One of many of these evaluations reads as follows:

"Sister Thelma generates a sense of confidence in her students. She begins class promptly and engages students in purposeful activity during all of the instructional time. Sister Thelma shows a realistic sense of time as she challenges her students to delve for deeper knowledge and understanding. She clearly communicates lesson objectives to her class and reviews the content of previous lessons. She provides opportunity during instruction for all students to respond and participate. The students appear to find their work challenging and interesting. Sister Thelma shows understanding and consideration in dealing with students. She works hard to motivate all the students, especially those who have difficulty grasping concepts. Sister Thelma is to be commended for her excellent use of teaching techniques that promote active student learning."

Sister Thelma wrote about her many blessings at the time of her Jubilee. One special memory recalled was when she was missioned in Arizona and Pope John Paul II was visiting for World Youth Day. The Sisters could meet with the Holy Father in the Coliseum or in the Cathedral in Phoenix. The Sisters went to the Cathedral and were seated at the end of the pew. Sister Thelma was able to kiss Pope John Paul II's hand as he walked down the aisle. In her words, "What a blessing I felt then and even now that he is St. John Paul, II."

After Sister Thelma completed her mission work in Wisconsin, Michigan, Arizona, California, Nebraska and Mississippi, she was asked to come home in 2004 to serve her Sisters at the Motherhouse and in St. Rita Health Center. There was no ministry that Sister Thelma did not like. She was very handy and had good common sense, which helped her accomplish many tasks in her role as executive housekeeper. She was willing to figure out a solution for whatever challenge that came to her.

Sister Thelma never gave up. In November 2018 her health declined to the point when she moved to St. Rita Health Center in order to receive the care that she needed. Even with this health change, Sister Thelma still had a serving heart. She requested to have a sewing machine in her bedroom so she could continue doing some of her tasks, as she was able. Sister Thelma has a wish for anyone who may think they are called to religious life. "May you be blessed in answering His call, just as I was. He did not say it would be easy, but He did promise you will not be disappointed. We thank God for the blessing that Sister Thelma has been to us!

Sister Thelma enjoyed life. She loved to play cards. She treasured the relationships that she had with her family and friends. She appreciated all the visits and always looked forward to family reunions. These past few months, Sister Thelma knew that her time on earth was coming to an end. She prepared and was looking forward to the face-to-face meeting with her Bridegroom. St. Joseph was there on Tuesday morning to accompany his Son, her Bridegroom, Jesus, to take her home. Sister Thelma, may you rest in peace. Amen!