



Sister Mary Winifred Brown Margaret Brown

Born	Estlin, Saskatchewan	November 30, 1925
Postulant	Sacred Heart College,	January 15, 1946
Novitiate	Sacred Heart College	July 25, 1946
First Profession	Sacred Heart College	July 26, 1948
Perpetual Vows	Sacred Heart College,	July 26, 1954
Died	Santa Maria - Regina	November 8, 2017

Sister Mary Winifred Brown (Margaret Brown), youngest child of Reuben Brown and Winifred (Farrell) was born in Estlin, Saskatchewan, Canada. She was predeceased by a sister, Catherine, and two brothers who died in infancy. Her three older surviving brothers predeceased her more than twenty years ago.

Winifred's family was vital and faith-full. In a talk she once gave, Winifred wrote about her family's impact of her life-long growth in faith. She concluded the talk by saying: "... in the end, I always go back to the faith of my father and mother who taught me to say, 'In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost'. And then with her typical humor added, 'because that's how we called Her in those days'."

Winifred was educated in several Canadian schools, colleges and universities in Wilcox, Saskatchewan, Montreal, Regina, Saskatoon, Winnipeg and Ottawa, and also in London England. By attending regular sessions, summer classes or taking courses by correspondence she completed B.A., B.Ed, and M.A. degrees. Sister Winifred was a life time student and enthusiastically attended as many workshops, talks and classes as she was able.

Teaching high school students was a satisfying apostolate for Winifred for twenty-three years. For fourteen of those years she was also a teaching principal. When not studying during the summer holidays, she taught Catechism classes in country parishes or marked examination papers for the Department of Education to supplement our Sacred Heart Academy's private school income.

Winifred's deep love for her family was certainly matched by her deep love for our religious congregation and her hundreds of Sisters. She served generously, humbly, wisely and compassionately as she exercised her giftedness for leadership in various roles. Winifred easily translated her own experience of family faith and of family life into a deep prayer life and community spirit in which we all shared. Her ability to be inclusive and to strengthen community extended far beyond the convent walls. Winifred was held in esteem by many as a

friend, an excellent communicator, a dedicated educator and care giver – all accomplished with kindness, cheerfulness and good humor.

Canadians who visited her in Rome, during the years she served as General Secretary, appreciated her gracious spirit, her enthusiasm as their tour guide, and her many fascinating stories. Winifred was a great conversationalist. Her contacts in person, by letter or phone and via e-mail were extensive, interesting and much appreciated.

Winifred was appointed to many positions in our Congregation. She was Local Superior in Brandon for two years, Councillor on the Provincial Leadership Team for six years, Provincial Leader for six years and General Secretary in Rome for nine years. In these various capacities she attended five General Chapters, one in England and four in Rome, and three Enlarged General Council meetings in India. When she returned to Canada in 1993 she spent a year at the Centre for Spiritual Growth in Ottawa. Then she volunteered to teach English in Myanmar and Bangladesh. Health problems brought her back to Canada after a few months.

This did not slow her down for long. Sister accepted to be the principal care giver for our senior sisters and those in nursing care at Santa Maria. True to form, she continued this service to the congregation with humility and devotion as long as she was able.

As well as being a high school educator and her involvement in our religious congregation, Sister Winifred generously accepted a number of positions on Boards, Associations and Committees in the Archdiocese of Regina, and at times served as a presenter, prayer companion and in whatever way she could help. In recognition of her distinguished service to the Catholic Church, Winifred was presented with the medal “Pro Ecclesia et Pontifice” in 2010. This medal is known as the “Cross of Hope” and is the highest award of the papacy given to lay people.

Initially, it was a struggle for Winifred to accept her failing health, her inability to serve actively, her diminishing independence, the loss of her incredible memory and to let go of so much that had given her life in this life. However, Winifred's faith enabled her to completely entrust herself to God and with open hands to say with Jesus: “Father, into your hands, I commend my spirit”. Her life with us ended peacefully as she entered into the fullness of life.

The night before Winifred's funeral, many Sisters gathered in Regina, to grieve together, pray, sing, and share memories of Winifred. It was a muted yet fitting “Irish wake” in honour of Winifred's richly textured life and ancestral heritage. Funeral Mass of the Resurrection took place at Christ the King R.C. Church in Regina with Archbishop Emeritus and Winifred's friend James Weisgerber presiding.