



Sister Dorothy Hunt, SSND

Jan. 21, 1922 – Oct. 24, 2018



How appropriate that Sister Dorothy Hunt, a talented lover of music would begin her autobiography with the words of the aria, “Un bel di” from the opera, *Madame Butterfly*. Yes, it was “one fine day,” but a cold wintry day, when God blessed George and Rose Osolnick Hunt with a baby daughter. History confirms that there were three feet of snow on the ground in Baltimore, Md. the day that Dorothy Agnes Hunt was born.

The Hunt ancestry dated back to American colonial days and George Hunt grew up on the banks of the Delaware River in New Jersey while Rose came to America from Yugoslavia in 1913. Older brother, James and Dorothy were soon followed by sisters, Nancy and Frances, to complete the Hunt family.

Dorothy was baptized at St. Ann’s Church, Baltimore, Md. on Feb. 12, 1922. She began first grade at St. Ann’s School where she got “a fine start under the instruction of Sister Mary Alice” SSND. In May, 1930, Dorothy received her first Holy Communion at St. Ann’s Church and retained “a vivid memory” of standing up and renewing her baptismal promises on that day.

Dorothy began what she called “her little musical training” when Santa Claus brought a piano to the Hunt home. She had piano lessons from the age of ten and took voice lessons during high school years. Always an advocate for good music, Dorothy came from a family of musicians who loved to sing and could play the piano and violin.

After graduation from the Institute of Notre Dame, Dorothy entered the School Sister of Notre Dame on Aug. 28, 1941. During the candidature years Dorothy learned about religious life and was prepared for her “future work” as a teacher by the normal school classes. She was received into the novitiate in the Motherhouse Chapel on Aisquith Street on July 8, 1943. She described the day as “a joyous occasion to receive the habit and a religious name.” Her name in religion, Sister Mary George, made her convert father a very happy man. Sister Mary George professed her first vows on July 31, 1944.

Sister Mary George’s first mission was Our Lady of Perpetual Help School in New York City. She was to teach grade four and play the organ for the children’s Mass on Sunday. She quotes, “a little learning is a dangerous thing” to describe how piano lessons for two children ended up becoming thirty-two and consumed her after school and Saturday hours. A bout with pneumonia, pleurisy and a persistent cough sent Sister to Notch Cliff for a six week recovery. When she returned to New York for another year, she no longer taught piano lessons (1944-46).

Sent to Baltimore, Sister George was a teacher of grades 3, 4 and 5 at St. Wenceslaus School (1946-1959). Sister received what she called a “heavy responsibility” when she became principal, eighth grade teacher, organist and local leader at St. Aloysius School, Reserve Twp., Pittsburgh, PA (1959-1965). She was the teacher of grades 7 and 8 at St. Andrew School, Baltimore (1965-66); principal and teacher of grades 7 and 8 at St. Mary’s School, Bryantown, MD (1966-72); principal at Sacred Heart of Jesus School, Baltimore (1972-74) and she remained principal after a consolidation of schools and a new name, Bishop John Neumann School, Baltimore (1974-76).



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After 32 years as a teacher and administrator, Sister Dorothy took a position as the coordinator of religious education at St. Mark's parish, Fallston, MD (1976-80). Dorothy tells in her autobiography that as she was meditating one January morning in 1980, it became "very clear that God had something else" for her to do. When she spoke to a provincial councilor, Dorothy was asked, "How would you feel about going to Nigeria?" "It seemed to be the work of the Holy Spirit" that Sister Gabriel Roeder hoped to return to Nigeria and Sister Virginia Brien had also requested to serve there. The three sisters prepared to leave for Nigeria in Jan., 1981. Sister Dorothy called her three and a half years teaching and living in Nigeria as an experience that could fill a book and that "it was a reward for following Christ."

On her return to the United States, Dorothy became the director of religion education at Annunciation parish, Rosedale, Baltimore, MD (1984-94). She spent the next 6 months on sabbatical with a pilgrimage to the Holy Land and several months at the Manna House of Prayer, Concordia, KS. Dorothy went to Nigeria once again as assistant postulant director at Makurdi (1995-97). Back in the US, Dorothy gave community service at St. Pius X parish, Baltimore (1997-98) before many years of community service at Villa Assumpta (1998-2013).

Sister Dorothy's professional education included a Bachelor of Science degree in Education from the College of Notre Dame of Maryland (now University) in 1954 and a Master of Education degree from Loyola College (now University) in 1972.

Dorothy said that many varied and enriching experiences afforded her the opportunity to grow as a woman of the Church. She led schools at a time of integration and rapid change. Her serious, agile mind enabled Dorothy to be independent, organized and precise. Her many talents included sketches for a new house for the sisters in Africa. Her subtle sense of humor and teasing was accompanied by her warm and lovely smile. Dorothy led a rich, prayerful life in which she met challenges and joys with generosity. She loved the quiet of the little chapel in Maria Health Care Center.

Sister Dorothy died peacefully with a smile on her face early on the morning of Oct. 24 at Maria Health Care Center, Villa Assumpta. A wake service was held in the chapel of Villa Assumpta on Mon., Oct. 29. The Christian liturgy of burial was celebrated there on Tuesday, Oct. 30 by Rev. John McCloskey, OFM Cap., chaplain of Villa Assumpta. He was assisted by the Rev. Mr. Herman Wilkins, deacon and dear friend of Sister Dorothy and the Rev. Mr. Tochi, deacon and student at St. Mary's Seminary. Interment followed at Villa Maria Cemetery, Glen Arm Rd., Glen Arm, Md. Sister Dorothy is survived by her sister, Nancy McGinnis and many nieces and nephews.

- Jeanne Hildenbrand SSND