

Sister Dorothy Stalder

*I will walk into this day with Thee, O Christ,
For in Thy wisdom, Thou dost understand me –
For in Thy strength, Thou dost keep me –
For in Thy love, Thou dost shelter me –
For in Thy mercy, Thou dost forgive me –
For in Thy patience, Thou dost work for me –
I will walk into this day with Thee O Christ, into tomorrow, even
into eternity. Amen*

Sister Dorothy Marie Stalder, 81 died Saturday June 27, 2009 at Kearney County Health Services, Minden, Nebraska. She was born October 16, 1927 to Edward and Emma (Lubeck) Stalder. Dorothy became a child of God through baptism at Trinity

Lutheran Church, Stamford, NE and was confirmed in the faith at Messiah Lutheran Church, Denver, CO.



December 1994

She long held a desire to be a missionary and to serve God, and eventually was introduced to the parish worker program and then the School for Church Workers in Baltimore and the deaconesses. She was happy in Baltimore, sharing life with other students and retired deaconesses. She often read and wrote letters for one of those retired sisters, Sister Magdalene Kasewurm, who had become blind in her later years. Sister Magdalene was one of the original sisters of the Baltimore Deaconess Motherhouse, and it was she who gave Sister Dorothy the prayer quoted above, one which both used every day of their lives.

In May, 1950 Sister Dorothy was invested into the Deaconess Community. “After hearing the words, ‘You shall now be called Sister Dorothy,’” there was a loud clash of thunder” – one of the memories Sister Dorothy had of that day! She was consecrated as a Deaconess on September 26, 1954 and remained active in the Deaconess Community of the Evangelical Lutheran Church of America throughout her life. Until 1992 she only missed one Community Assembly. Her consecration verse, John 15:16 “I chose you”, ‘sustained her during the ups and downs of life.’ Her warm smile was her trademark, and connected her to all around. One 1975 newspaper clipping described her: “Sister Dorothy is a quiet women’s rights advocate. Her work as a deaconess ... exemplifies the active role today’s woman takes in church.”

Her education included a BA from Midland College, Fremont, NE, a diploma from the School for Church Workers, Baltimore, MD, and in 1962 a MA in Religion from NY University and Biblical Seminary, NY. Sister Dorothy served as a Director of Christian Education in Lutheran congregations in York, PA, Hastings, NE and Albuquerque, NM, Silver Spring, MD and Lawrence, KS. She served as a chaplain at Bethphage Mission, Axtell, NE and at Eben Ezer, Brush, CO.

Retiring in Greeley CO in 1992, she continued to provide leadership in a wide variety of Christian Education programs. She moved to Minden NE four years later to live with her sister Joyce Dorn. She suffered a stroke which left her confined to a wheelchair, but able to speak and interact alertly with both family and friends. She moved into long term care in Minden.

She described the highlights of her ministry as: writing festival dramas, leading retreats, teaching Bible classes, and visiting shut-ins. She worked well with all ages, and found great joy in working with the mentally and physically challenged residents of Bethpage. She enjoyed travel, being a hostess and caring for pets. Survivors include one sister, Margaret Vincent, Long Island, KS; a niece, Diane Miller; nephews, Paul, John and Bryan Vincent and Daniel Dorn. She was preceded in death by her parents; one sister Joyce Dorn; niece Carol Joy Vincent and great nephew Thomas Jeffery Miller. She was a great aunt to 10 nieces and nephews.

Memorial services will be at Bethany Lutheran Church, Minden, NE, on July 2, 2009 at 9:00 am. Burial will follow at Stamford Cemetery, Stamford, NE at 11:30 am. Memorial gifts may be given to Bethany Lutheran Church, Minden, NE or Trinity Lutheran Church, Stamford, NE.



Circa 1954

She left a lovely legacy for us in the Deaconess Community: pictures of where she lived and worked and words describing her ministry in each place. She says about her move to a new city: “Six times in my life, I went to a completely strange city to work– and three times did not know another person in the whole state – so there were times of loneliness. However, Christ was always there, and it did not take long to find friends.”

She died surrounded by her family, peacefully bathed in the love she quietly gave to others during her lifetime. We give thanks for this consecrated woman, dedicated to the work of the Lord and His Church. We know Sister Dorothy continues in that Love that will not let us go, that she has truly walked into eternity with Christ.



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