

Jean Nelson, CSJ
June 29, 1930 - March 1, 2017

Jean was the youngest of four girls, (Marie Marcella, Maxine Ann, Elaine Cecelia- now Mary Martin, CSJ- and Jean Rose) born to Barbara Kopacek and Martin Nelson in St. Paul June 29, 1930. She was the family tomboy, playing football, baseball, and softball. She was an avid fisherwoman, and especially enjoyed fishing for walleye, crappies and sunfish. She even caught halibut and salmon while fishing in Alaska.

She attended Holy Spirit Elementary School and St. Joseph's Academy. By fourth grade she knew she "wanted to be a nun," so she joined the CSJ community in 1948, after high school graduation. She attended the Teacher's College on Summit Avenue and then the College of St. Catherine evenings and weekends, while simultaneously beginning her teaching career. She graduated from the (then) College of St. Catherine in 1962, with a BA in English, Art and Education.

Jean taught in schools in the Twin Cities, and in Grand Forks, ND, and Marshall, MN. While teaching in Marshall, Jean and other CSJs took a pottery class at Southwest State University, "in jeans and veils." From that time on she was hooked on pottery. In 1979, when she was principal at St. Kevin's, the school purchased a pottery wheel and kiln. Additionally, from 1972-1981 she was the Co-Director of the Montessori Teachers Training Program. During that same time, she began teaching and making pottery at St. Catherine University, which she then did for 14 years. "Pottery has changed my life," she said, adding that because of her pottery work, she made many friends, "got to teach at the college," exercised her creativity, and mentored many people.

She showed and sold her work at pottery shows and art fairs throughout the area. She particularly enjoyed making mugs and bowls; and said that "making the urns for all the sisters is very humbling." The first urn she ever made was in the early 1980's- for her own sister. The urn she made for herself tells her truth: "The greatest piece of pottery is the earthen vessel of our lives."

She travelled to China, France, Austria, Germany, Prince Edward Island, Nova Scotia, Alaska and Hawaii, had two kitties she loved, and was a whiz at casino games on her iphone!

Jean was preceded in death by her parents, Barbara Kopacek and Martin Nelson, and by her sisters Marie Marcella Rutledge and Maxine Ann Schaal. She is survived by her

sister Mary Martin Nelson, CSJ, nieces, nephews, grand-nieces and grand-nephews, her good friends, Jill, Joanie and Gretchen, her Spirit Sisters and by Sisters of St. Joseph and Consociates.

Mass of Christian Burial was held on March 8, 2017 at Our Lady of the Presentation Chapel in St. Paul. Interment was at Resurrection Cemetery

May she live on in God's love and peace.