

Sister Seraphim Schonacker (Mary Schonacker)

Sister Seraphim Schonacker was born on April 22, 1856 in Peru, Ohio. Her parents were Jacob and Caroline Ruff Schonacker. On January 2, 1874, she entered the Sisters of St. Francis in Tiffin, Ohio. She professed her vows on August 12, 1874 in Tiffin.

Sister Seraphim came to St. Joseph's Hospital, Minot, North Dakota in 1911 as the first superior. She was one of four sisters sent to serve in the hospital by her order. Soon after she arrived in Minot, Sister Seraphim founded the school of nursing at St. Joseph's Hospital. When the sisters were recalled to Tiffin, Sister Seraphim and Sister Victoria Rachel made the difficult decision to remain in Minot. In 1914, both sisters became member of the community of Sisters of St. Francis of Penance and Christian Charity . She was also overseer for the building of St. Joseph's Hospital in 1917.

Sister Seraphim died at St. Joseph's Hospital, Minot, North Dakota on April 4, 1954. At the time of her death, she was the longest professed religious sister in the United States, and also one of the oldest. She is buried in St. Leo's Cemetery, Minot, North Dakota.