



Birth  
January 18, 1929

Baptism  
January 27, 1929

Profession  
July 28, 1960

Death  
July 6, 2015

Burial  
Holy Cross  
(Togcha) Cemetery  
Yona, Guam

*Precious and blessed is  
the death of the faithful  
before God... for  
they die in union with  
their dear Jesus, in the  
grace of God, in peace.*

Blessed Theresa of Jesus Gerhardinger  
Foundress of the School Sisters of Notre Dame  
Letter 11, September 10, 1831

## *In Loving Memory*

### Sister Carmen Francis Siguenza, SSND

**B**orn in Agana, Guam on January 18, 1929, to Jesus and Carmen (Mendiola) Siguenza, she was baptized Remedios at Dulce Nombre de Maria Cathedral in Agana. She was the fifth of seven living children in the family. Four siblings died in infancy. Her early years were happy and carefree, at home with her loving family. Life changed with World War II when Guam was captured by the Japanese on December 10, 1941. Her father was taken as a prisoner of war. She was separated from her siblings, who left Agana both for safety and to work on the ranch of a relative. She remained with her mother, doing errands and helping with her father's clothing and meals while he was in the concentration camp.

She noted in her autobiography: "During these days everything was confiscated by the Japanese soldiers. Food was so difficult to obtain that I spent practically my whole day trying to get a few bowls of rice and canned goods for the family. If I was fortunate to get more, we usually sent some to my brothers and sisters at the ranch. I believe it was after a year when my father was finally released. Then our sorrows were changed into joy for it was a reunion with the rest of the family."

Remedios completed her elementary education at public school and graduated from George Washington High School in Sinajawa, Guam, in 1949. As an eighth grader, the thought of becoming a religious began. The Mercy Sisters were the only religious order on the island at the time. When she shared the idea with her parents, her mother was supportive but her father was not. He thought Remedios was being influenced by girlfriends who had already joined the Mercy Sisters.

She wrote, "I was hurt about my father's attitude. But I told our Lord that if He wants me He will get me anyhow.

"Years had passed and many activities had entered my life but even then my love for the religious life had not left me entirely. A year before my graduation in 1949, I had already been working as a part time student teacher in Sinajana Public School. I taught for about eight years when I finally realized the great need for well-trained teachers for our people. I then decided to go to a Catholic college and through the late Sister Eucharita, I was accepted at Mount Mary College."

While at Mount Mary College in Milwaukee, she got to know the sisters and was deeply impressed by their friendliness and kindness. At a college retreat, she prayed about whether or not she had a vocation for the religious life. During the Easter break, she visited the motherhouse in Milwaukee and attended "A Day at the Candidature" program. She wrote to her parents about her desire to become a School Sister of Notre Dame. Remedios was elated to receive their letter which affirmed her in this decision.

She entered the SSND candidature in 1958 and was received as a novice in 1959 and given the religious name, Mary Carmen Francis. She professed her first vows on July 28, 1960. In addition to her studies at the Territorial

*continued*

# In Loving Memory



*Sister Carmen Francis Siguenza*



College in Guam, Sister Carmen Francis received her bachelor's with a major in education and minors in social studies and English from Mount Mary College, Milwaukee in 1961.

Sister Carmen Francis worked as an educator for 39 years. She taught primary, intermediate and junior high students at the following schools in Guam: St. Francis, Yona; San Vicente, Barrigada; and Mount Carmel, Agat; and in the Caroline Islands: St. Mary, Yap. She was elected to a four-year term on the SSND Regional Council for Guam, serving from 1985 to 1989. Sister Carmen Francis left educational ministry in 2003 due to health problems. Following medical treatment in Los Angeles, she returned to Talofofo, Guam where she belonged to the Notre Dame Community and served through prayer and presence.

Sister Carmen is remembered for her gratitude/trust in God and her deep spirituality. Though she experienced ill health and pain for many years, she never complained. She humbly took on a new mission of serving by her prayer and presence. She was constantly praying – referring to a list of the names of those whom she wanted to remember in her prayers. Many friends, former students and sisters were blessed by her strong spirituality. Whether they knew it or not, she prayed for them.

Sister Carmen Francis died on July 6, 2015 at the Notre Dame Community in Talofofo. She was 86. Masses and rosaries began July 8. Last respects and her Mass of Christian Burial were held July 16 at Saint Francis Catholic Church in Yona, Guam. Archbishop Anthony Sablan Apuron, OFM Cap., D.D. was the main celebrant with many priests concelebrating. Father Patrick Castro, OFM Cap., was the homilist.

Sister Carmen Francis Siguenza is survived by many family members, dear friends and the SSND Community.

Two of her favorite psalms beautifully represent her life and relationship with God. The beloved scripture verses were:

“The Lord is my shepherd; I shall not want.”

*Psalm 23:1*

“What shall I return to the Lord for all that he has given me?”

*Psalm 116:12*

*This remembrance is compiled from SSND archival information.*

To make a memorial gift,  
please visit our secure  
online donation page  
[www.ssndcentralpacific.org/donate](http://www.ssndcentralpacific.org/donate)



**School Sisters  
of Notre Dame**  
Central Pacific Province

TRANSFORMING THE WORLD  
THROUGH EDUCATION