

2016 Jubilee



First Profession
July 29, 1966

María Elena Ferrer-López, SSND

50 Years

Sister María Elena taught elementary school for 13 years in Texas and New Mexico after her first profession of vows in 1966. She also served in religious education programs at Our Lady of Perpetual Help in Dallas and at San Jose Parish in Albuquerque. She then ministered as elementary school administrator for eight years at Our Lady of Perpetual Help in Dallas and St. Anthony in Casa Grande, Arizona. After participating in a renewal program in Chatawa, Mississippi in 1989, she served the Hispanic youth in the Diocese of Dallas before becoming the director of religious education at Cathedral Santuario de Guadalupe, also in Dallas. After five years in that position, Sister María Elena served as pastoral associate for six years at St. Edward's Parish in Dallas. She then accepted the position of vocation director for the School Sisters of Notre Dame's former Dallas Province for one year before being elected to the provincial council of the Dallas Province. She was a provincial councilor for nine years, and in 2011, served as provincial councilor for the Central Pacific Province for one four-year term. Currently, she ministers as faith formation director in the Diocese of Amarillo, Texas. Sister María Elena received her bachelor's in elementary education and master's in religious education from the University of Dallas in Irving, Texas.

Memories I would like to share...

At the end of 1999, I participated in the millennial International Program in Regensburg, Germany. 65 SSND participants from 22 provinces and two regions gathered with the General Council, presenters and translators for two weeks. This experience was memorable and significant because the meaning of internationality in our congregation came alive and deeply influenced my understanding of the "universal needs and the call to foster within ourselves and others a responsible concern for the people of the world." (*You Are Sent* 36)

First-hand accounts from our sisters who shared about their suffering behind the "Iron Curtain," the experience of destruction and suffering during World War II, and the support received from other parts of the of the congregation spoke to me about transcending political and national barriers to be truly united with one another.

A second and very important opportunity was the pilgrimage to the holy places of our congregation and the feeling of belonging and being welcomed by our sisters in that part of the Congregation greatly helped me appreciate and affirm my identity as a School Sister of Notre Dame.