

# *In Loving Memory*

## Sister Dolores Shea



**Birth**  
July 11, 1931

**Baptism**  
July 26, 1931

**Profession**  
August 2, 1954

**Death**  
August 31, 2019

**Burial**  
Sancta Maria in Ripa  
Cemetery, St. Louis, MO

*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

Sister Dolores, formerly Rose Margaret, Shea, 88, died peacefully on Saturday morning, August 31, 2019, at Elizabeth House, The Sarah Community, Bridgeton, MO. The second of three children, she was born on July 11, 1931, to Margaret (Niehaus) and Joseph Shea in St. Louis. She was baptized at Our Lady of Sorrows Church on July 26, 1931, and given the name Dolores Marie. An older brother, Robert, had died at 15 months of age, a year before Dolores was born. Her younger brother, Donald, was born in 1933.

At Thanksgiving in 1932, her father, who was employed as a yard clerk for the Terminal Railroad Company, was forced to quit work due to his eye sight failing. Her father did odd jobs until he became completely blind. At that time, her mother sought employment to supplement her father's meager monthly pension. The young couple struggled during the depression to feed and clothe their children. Despite their hardships, they provided a caring and loving environment for the small family unit.

Dolores attended Our Lady of Sorrows Grade School and Rosati-Kain High School, where she was taught by the School Sisters of Notre Dame. A month before her high school graduation in 1949, her father died. To assist the family, Dolores found secretarial employment with several companies until she entered the candidature at Sancta Maria in Ripa, St. Louis, on August 30, 1951. She was received into the novitiate on August 1, 1953, and given the name Rose Margaret. She professed first vows on August 2, 1954, and final vows on August 2, 1960.

Sister Dolores earned a bachelor's degree in English from the former Notre Dame College, St. Louis, in 1960 and a master's degree in education from St. Louis University in 1968.

During her 65 years as a vowed religious, Sister Dolores served in a variety of ministries. She was an elementary educator for 27 years while also serving as an organist and director of the children's choir for 16 of those years; a pastoral minister for 11 years, while serving as the director of religious education for 4 of those years; a tutor for 7 years; a driver for our retired sisters at Villa Gesu for 2 years. She visited the sick and infirm and cared for the elderly in their homes through the Sisters of St. Joseph of Carondelet Care Ministries program for 5 years; volunteered at de Greeff Hospice House at St. Anthony's Medical Center for 6 years. She also found time to volunteer in various departments at Theresa Center and to assist sisters who were transitioning to The Sarah Community with sorting through their things and preparing for the move.

Her ministries took her to Our Lady of Fatima, Galena Park, Texas, and St. Helen, Fresno, California. In Illinois, she ministered at St. Mary, Eldorado; St. Henry, Belleville, St. Joseph and Holy Angels, East St. Louis; St. Anthony, Effingham; St. Charles, DuBois; Our Lady of Mount Carmel, Herrin; Holy

*continued*

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*Sister Dolores Shea*



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TRANSFORMING THE WORLD  
THROUGH EDUCATION

Spirit, Carterville. In Missouri, she served at Sacred Heart, Poplar Bluff; St. George, Linn; and St. Barbara, St. Rose of Lima, Villa Gesu, Notre Dame Tutorial/Learning Center, CSJ Care Ministries, de Greeff Hospice House and Theresa Center, St. Louis.

Over the years, Sister Dolores experienced a number of health-related conditions, which would have been an obstacle to ministry for less determined persons. She resolved to continue serving as long as possible. As her health and energy level diminished, she was missioned to Veronica House at The Sarah Community, Bridgeton, Missouri in June 2013. Following a fall and broken hip, she was placed on hospice in mid-August 2019. She died peacefully on August 31, 2019 at Elizabeth House, The Sarah Community

A wake and prayer service were held at The Sarah Community and Theresa Center on September 3, 2019. The Mass of Christian Burial was celebrated the following morning with Rev. John Eaton, OFM, as presider. Burial was in the Sancta Maria in Ripa cemetery. Her brother, Donald, family members, classmates, friends and SSNDs attended the funeral services.

Sister Dolores is survived by her brother, Donald (Rosemary) Shea, nieces, nephews and their children. She was preceded in death by her parents and her brother, Robert.

Sister Dolores was remembered as a very thoughtful, caring person who had a great concern for the poor and marginalized. She had a sharp, inquiring mind and a keen memory. She was always interested in world events and SSND happenings. She was an excellent teacher and wanted her classroom to be a place of peace for the children she taught. She was devoted to her family and had a marvelous sense of humor. She was a tremendous correspondent with classmates who were missioned at a distance or with former community members. Sister Dolores had a great love for Our Lady and the congregation.

From large cities to rural areas, from classroom teaching of youth to care of the elderly, she continued to live the mission of the School Sisters of Notre Dame. Sister Dolores was a participant in the Rush Religious Orders Study, thereby continuing to teach others through the research that will be done. May she now rejoice in her new life with her God whom she served so faithfully!

*By Sister Carol Marie Wildt, SSND*