



Birth

December 25, 1929

Baptism

January 12, 1930

Profession

July 29, 1950

Death

November 5, 2020

Burial

**Chatawa Cemetery,
Chatawa, Mississippi**

*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 Dorothy Maniscalco

Dorothy Mary Maniscalco was born on the 1929 Christmas morning, in New Orleans. Anthony and Dorothy (Accardo) Maniscalco welcomed this holiday gift as their fifth child. Both Dorothy and Anthony were immigrants who had begun their lives in the little village of Poggioreale, Italy. Neither knew the other until they came to America. Dorothy cherished growing up in her international family's Italian culture.

She always looked forward to welcoming the Poggioreale relatives who came to visit the Maniscalcos in Louisiana and she was grateful for the opportunity she had to visit them in Poggioreale. She was able to do this as an extension of the volunteer summer service at the School Sisters of Notre Dame (SSND) Generalate Community in Rome. Dorothy reveled in all things Italian.

St. Alphonsus Parish, a large part of the Irish Channel in New Orleans, is where the Maniscalcos grew up and attended school. Dorothy, or Dot as she was familiarly known, was only five-years-old when she started school where she was taught by the School Sisters of Notre Dame (SSND). She graduated from high school in 1946.

Dot wrote of beginning a new part of her life, "After graduation, I secured a position at the largest hardware store in the South as a typist clerk. The position was a very nice one, but I wasn't quite satisfied; something was missing in my life. I made the Immaculate Conception Novena in our parish that December for the grace to know my vocation. At the end, I was quite sure that I wanted to enter the SSND who had taught me all my life. Another friend was entering at the end of December. Since I was now so sure, I thought I would enter with her."

Dot's choice was not quite as easy as she thought, for when she told her parents, her dad strongly refused to allow her to enter. Dot continued the story, "I kept on working. But one day in the spring I just told my daddy I was going and he didn't answer me. In August, in the chapel of the SSND, with five other young women from the Redemptorist High School, I received the white bonnet in the presence of all my family except my daddy. My daddy was heartbroken and it was hurting me so much. Before we left for St. Louis the next day he came to see me. That made my heart a little lighter." Dot's two years in the candidature, with its introduction to the spiritual and professional life she would lead, went by quickly as did the year in the novitiate. On reception as a novice on July 28, 1949, she was given the SSND habit and the name, Jeannette Marie. She was known by this name until she returned to her baptismal name in the 1980s.

On her profession of vows on July 29, 1950, Sister Jeannette began her 63 years in the education ministry. Of one early assignment she wrote, "In the beginning of the school year, I had 55 little first-graders, boys and girls. Was I ever happy! I have loved little children very much as long as I can remember." Though her organizational talent prompted her assignments as principal, or as part of the school administration, in several schools, the call of teaching little children returned her to their classroom during all of her many years in education.

continued

In Loving Memory



Sister Dorothy Maniscalco



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Transforming the world
through education

She earned a bachelor's degree in elementary education from the former Notre Dame College, St. Louis, in 1959 and a master's degree in elementary education from Xavier University, New Orleans, in 1969.

She served in administration at St. Philip Neri in Metairie, Louisiana, Immaculate Conception, Laurel, Mississippi, Our Lady of Mount Carmel in Houston, Texas, and Our Lady of Prompt Succor in Chalmette, Louisiana. Sister Dot was small in stature, but not in authority. An icon of that authority was the megaphone used in addressing all the children on the playground or in the gym. The local newspaper, The St. Bernard Voice, reported at her retirement ceremony in 2014, "Her famous megaphone has been immortalized on the internet by several of her former students who created an OLPS alumni page titled Sister Dot's Megaphone."

Sisters Dot and Lester, along with many of our sisters and their families, sought refuge from Katrina in Chatawa, Mississippi. When those with homes were allowed back into Chalmette, they were astonished to see their convent site. One would find it difficult to imagine the devastation to the city. But Sister Dot's usual positive outlook shown through as she projected. 'It will come back.' And it did. The two sisters lived and ministered from the renovated site for another eight years.

Sister Dot loved holy days and holidays. Perhaps the cause was the day of her birth. All year she would gather decorations to make each occasion festive. But gathering decorations was only secondary to gathering the family. Because this close-knit, Italian family was ever expanding, a family home was too small to accommodate them. Now Sister Dot with her school connection could provide the space. With her teacher's organization skills, she had the entertainment, the games, the prizes, the refreshments, and the decorations assembled to make each event memorable.

After almost four decades at Our Lady of Prompt Succor in Chalmette and now in her 80s, Sister Dot and Sister Lester, together, retired to St. Mary of the Pines, in Chatawa, Mississippi. When the community moved to a senior living facility, Dot was required to wait until the skilled care part near the SSND community at St. Anthony's Gardens was completed. The coronavirus pandemic further delayed the move to Covington, Louisiana. Finally, near the end of October an ambulance transported Sister Dot to her new home. She died peacefully there on the morning of November 5, 2020.

Sister was preceded in death by her parents, her brothers and sisters. She is survived by numerous nieces and nephews. May our Sister Dorothy now enjoy the eternal celebration of our heavenly home!

By Sister MarieClare Powell, SSND