



Birth
March 11, 1931

Baptism
April 5, 1931

Profession
July 17, 1952

Death
June 12, 2022

Burial
Our Lady of Good Counsel
Cemetery

*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 Germaine (James Marie) Mulcahey

On the feast of the Blessed Trinity, June 12, 2022, one week before the celebration of her 70th Jubilee as a School Sister of Notre Dame, Sister Germaine Mulcahey, 91, died peacefully at 4:45 p.m. in Notre Dame Health Care, Our Lady of Good Counsel, Mankato, Minnesota. Sisters were praying with her in the hours before her death.

On March 11, 1931, at St. Joseph's Hospital in Mankato, Minnesota, James and Alice Mulcahey welcomed their seventh child and second daughter to the family. At her baptism at St. Ann's Church in nearby Janesville a few weeks later, she was named Germaine Catherine. Germaine received this name in honor of a Franciscan sister, Sister Germaine, who had been her mother's supervisor and good friend at St. Mary's Hospital, Rochester, where her mother worked as a nurse. When Germaine was about a year old, her father tripped while carrying his gun and was fatally injured. Germaine's youngest sister, Peggy, was born one month after their father's death. Germaine's mother decided to stay on the family farm with her eight children. With the help of a hired hand and the older boys, she continued to keep the farm running. (The farm is still in the Mulcahey family, being run by the fourth generation.)

Germaine attended Janesville Public School. On her last day of second grade, her brother Jimmy, 15, drowned. It was another tragedy for the family.

While in public school, Germaine had minimal contact with women religious, only seeing them when they taught vacation school. When Germaine was a sophomore in high school, she and her sister Peggy, who was a freshman, began attending Good Counsel Academy in Mankato as boarders. It took the Mulcahey girls a few months to get accustomed to being taught by sisters, but eventually the adjustment was made. Germaine later wrote, "After entering Good Counsel Academy, the desire to be a sister, which I had since the first time sisters taught me at vacation school, kept growing." She decided at the beginning of her senior year to join the School Sisters of Notre Dame (SSND).

Germaine graduated from Good Counsel Academy in 1949 and entered the SSND candidature that fall. As a second-year candidate, she taught 30 second graders at St. Mary's School in Shakopee. Upon her reception into the novitiate, she was given the name Sister James Marie, the name of both her father and deceased brother. She later returned to her baptismal name. Following profession of first vows in 1952, Sister Germaine began a 54-year teaching ministry with an emphasis on intermediate grades, with a special liking for fifth graders. She taught at St. Agnes, St. Andrew and St. Matthew, all in St. Paul; Immaculate Conception, Lonsdale; St. Anne, Wabasso; St. John the Baptist, Searles; SS. Peter & Paul and St. Joseph the Worker, both in Mankato, Minnesota; Sacred Heart, Eden, South Dakota; St. Benedict, Strasburg, North Dakota; and finished her full-time teaching with a 21-year stay at St. Joseph, Rosemount, Minnesota. In 1960, she completed her bachelor's degree from Mount Mary College (now University) with a major in education.

continued

In Loving Memory



*Sister Germaine (James
Marie) Mulcahey*



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School Sisters
of Notre Dame
Central Pacific Province

Transforming the world
through education

In 2002, Sister Germaine reflected on her teaching ministry in an article in an SSND publication, NAMA News. In response to the question asking, “How has SSND encouraged your continuing education and how has that encouragement benefitted your students,” she wrote in part, “The community has given me countless opportunities to become a better teacher. . . . All of these have enriched me and allowed me to become more qualified, a better person and, hence, a better teacher. Education never stops. . . . We cannot give what we don’t have. Education as an SSND taught me to develop each child’s potential. It has been a great joy and privilege for me to assist children to use their talents, to move from elementary to secondary school, and eventually to build the Earth. Like Mother Theresa, I am convinced that the world can be transformed by education. It is enough for me to have played a small part in making that happen.”

Sister Germaine retired from full-time teaching in 2007, and enjoyed a year’s sabbatical. She followed that with seven years of tutoring at the East Side Learning Center in St. Paul. In 2015, she retired fully and moved to Our Lady of Good Counsel, where she engaged in community service and volunteer activities. She became a volunteer in Mankato’s VINE Faith in Action “Caring Connection” program. Until COVID-19, she provided regular in-person visits to a woman who lived alone and was socially isolated.

Janesville, Sister Germaine’s hometown, is very proud of its Irish heritage and celebrates St. Patrick’s Day with a parade of the Irish clans. In 2009, Sister Germaine was chosen as the Grand Marshal for the Irish American Club of Southern Minnesota’s St. Patrick’s Day parade. She was surprised and honored by this designation. She was also the designer of the Mulcahey clan banner that was carried in the parade each year. Sister Germaine had a great connection with her family and, as each of her siblings died, her nieces and nephews have stepped up to continue this connection.

The funeral Mass for Sister Germaine was held Thursday, June 16, 2022, in the Good Counsel Chapel, with Father Gene Stenzel as president. A prayer of remembrance preceded the funeral. Cremation followed the funeral. Burial in the Good Counsel cemetery will take place at a later date. She is survived by nieces and nephews, and her sisters in community, the School Sisters of Notre Dame and SSND associates. She was preceded in death by her parents, James and Alice (Jewison) Mulcahey, her sisters Marie Maxwell and Margaret Miller, and her brothers Robert, James, Gerald, Patrick and Bert.

By Sister Mary Kay Ash, SSND