



Birth
July 24, 1937

Baptism
August 4, 1937

Profession
August 3, 1957

Death
December 18, 2020

Burial
Mount Olivet Catholic
Cemetery, Wheat Ridge,
Colorado

*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 Jeanne Marie Waggoner

The oldest of four children was born to Louise (Schnettler) and William Waggoner in St. Louis, on July 24, 1937. She was baptized by her Reverend Uncle, Father John Schnettler, at St. Engelbert Church on August 4, 1937, and named Jeanne Marie. Two brothers and a sister would complete the family.

When she was four years old, the family moved to Vallejo, California. She began school at St. Vincent's and her teachers were the Dominican Sisters of San Rafael. After three years, the family moved to Denver, where she completed her elementary education at St. Philomena School under the tutelage of the Sisters of Loretto. During her junior high years, she began to seriously consider religious life. Upon completion of her elementary education, she asked to enter an aspiranture. With her parents, she visited the Sisters of Loretto and the School Sisters of Notre Dame (SSND) motherhouses. Following these visits, she was encouraged by her parents and pastor to enter the aspiranture at Sancta Maria in Ripa in St. Louis.

Jeanne Marie entered the candidature at Sancta Maria in Ripa on September 1, 1955. She was received into the novitiate on August 1, 1956, and given the name, M. Philomena, much to the delight of her pastor in Denver. She professed first vows on August 3, 1957, and final vows on August 3, 1963. Since there were no SSND in Colorado, there was some discussion as to which province she would be a member. It was decided that she would belong to the St. Louis province. Her mother's sister, Sister Leocadia Schnettler, SSND, had died about five weeks before Jeanne was born. After she was professed, her mother told Jeanne that Sister Leocadia had prayed before she died that the child she was bearing would take her place in SSND.

Sister Jeanne Marie earned a bachelor degree in mathematics from the former Notre Dame College, St. Louis, in 1962 and a master's degree in private school administration from the University of San Francisco in 1979.

Sister Jeanne Marie has spent over 60 years in Catholic education; often in a dual role as teacher and musician. She began her ministry at San Jose, Albuquerque. In Missouri, she ministered at Immaculate Conception, Jackson; Most Pure Heart of Mary, Chamois; St. Liborius, St. Louis; St. Joseph, Scott City. She served 10 years at St. Jude Academy, San Diego, California, as principal, teacher and musician. She returned to St. Louis and was principal at St. Engelbert's. Following the death of her mother in 1983, she requested a leave of absence for a year to care for her father in Denver. The next 15 years, she was a teacher and computer specialist at St. Rita Grade School in San Diego, California. In 1999, she began her ministry as a special needs teacher at St. Theresa School in Denver. In 2020, she continued as a volunteer at the school. She died peacefully on December 18, 2020, at The Denver Hospice facility in Denver.

A funeral Mass was live-streamed from the Good Shepherd Catholic Church in Denver on January 5, 2021 with Rev. Jim Fox as celebrant. She was buried at

continued

In Loving Memory



Mount Olivet Catholic Cemetery, Wheat Ridge, Colorado. Sister Jeanne Marie is survived by her sister, Marilyn Ramponi, two brothers: William and John Waggoner, relatives, colleagues, classmates, friends and the SSND community. She was preceded in death by her parents.

Sister Jeanne Marie has ministered most of her life with a diverse population of the economic poor and with a variety of cultures. She was remembered for her smile, a smile like that of the innocent children who were so close to her heart. She was a teacher of remedial reading and math in the primary grades in an inner-city school for over the last 20 years. As an avid reader, she was a model for her students. She encouraged her colleagues and shared her faith and trust in God. She formed a strong community bond with staff even where there were no School Sisters of Notre Dame. Though physically distant from SSND, she has remained in contact with the sisters, especially her classmates, through handwritten notes and cards. Love for her family, devotion to Mary, a sense of humor and a grateful heart were evident in her life of fidelity to her God. May she now rejoice in her new life with her God.

By Sister Carol Marie Willitt, SSND

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