

# *In Loving Memory*

## Sister Mary Clared Coyne



Birth  
April 3, 1927

Baptism  
April 24, 1927

Profession  
July 30, 1947

Death  
July 15, 2024

Burial  
Chatawa 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

Sister Mary Clared Coyne, 97, passed away unexpectedly in her sleep in the early morning of July 15, 2024, at St. Anthony's Gardens in Covington, Louisiana.

She was the oldest of three children, born to Claribelle (McNelly) and Edward Coyne on April 3, 1927, in San Antonio, Texas. She was baptized at St. Gerard's Church on April 24, 1927, and named Mary Ellen. Two younger brothers, Martin and Patrick, completed the Coyne family. Mary Ellen grew up in a happy, fun-loving and stable family.

In her childhood, the family moved several times due to her father's job transfers. By the time she was in the 8th grade, she had attended five different schools: Highland Park in San Antonio; St. Gerard in San Antonio; Ward #1 and Ward #2 in Gonzales and Horace Mann Junior High in San Antonio. She spent her high school years at St. Gerard in San Antonio. Her parents instructed their children in the Catholic religion, which included reciting the Baltimore catechism lessons.

She began piano lessons when she was eight years old. During her freshman year at St. Gerard's, her music teacher, Sister Francis de Sales Althoff, SSND told Mary Ellen that she thought she had a religious vocation. Mary Ellen rejected the idea of a religious vocation at the time, but the thought continued to recur. In May of her senior year, she shared the prospect with her parents. Initially, they discounted the idea, but after further discussion and prayer, consented to her entrance into the congregation of the School Sisters of Notre Dame (SSND).

Mary Ellen's first train ride took her up to St. Louis where she entered the candidature at Sancta Maria in Ripa on August 28, 1944. She was received into the novitiate on July 29, 1946, and given the name Mary Clared, a combination of her parents' names. She pronounced first vows on July 30, 1947, and final vows on July 30, 1953.

She earned a bachelor's degree in music from Webster College (now University), in Webster Groves, Missouri in 1954; a master's degree in music from the University of Houston in Houston in 1962 and a master's degree in religious studies from Notre Dame Seminary in New Orleans in 1975.

Sister Mary Clared was a music teacher in elementary schools for 24 years. She taught at St. Joseph, East St. Louis, Illinois; St. Engelbert, St. Louis; Our Lady of Mount Carmel, Houston; St. Gregory Nongraded School, Tyler, Texas and Holy

*continued*

# In Loving Memory



*Sister Mary Clared Coyne*



To make a memorial gift,  
please visit our secure  
online donation page  
[www.ssndcentralpacific.org/donate](http://www.ssndcentralpacific.org/donate)



**School Sisters  
of Notre Dame**  
Central Pacific Province

Transforming the world  
through education

Rosary, San Antonio. She shared her talent as a music educator with secondary school students for another decade, including: St. Gerard Majella in Baton Rouge and Sacred Heart High School in New Orleans. While at Sacred Heart, she would travel across town to teach music several days a week at Redemptorist High School.

In 1984, Sister Mary Clared began caring for her mother in San Antonio until she passed away in 1989. She was then asked if she would consider going to St. Mary of the Pines in Chatawa, Mississippi as liturgist and activities director. What was initially a three-year commitment ultimately resulted in her ministering there for 29 years. She also worked with the RCIA and played the organ at the neighboring parish, St. James in Magnolia, Mississippi.

Along with the other sisters from Chatawa, Sister Mary Clared moved to St. Anthony's Gardens, Covington, in October 2019. During these last five years, she did volunteer service and played the piano for the daily liturgy. She passed away in her sleep on the morning of July 15, 2024, at St. Anthony's Gardens.

Funeral services were held on July 24, 2024, at Most Holy Trinity Catholic Church in Covington. The prayer service preceding the funeral liturgy included the reading of her biography and a sharing of memories. Rev. Rodney Bourg, pastor, was presider for the Mass of Christian Burial. Four additional priests concelebrated the liturgy with him. Family members, friends, School Sisters of Notre Dame and SSND associates attended the funeral services. Sister Mary Clared chose a green burial and was buried in the Chatawa Cemetery in Chatawa.

Sister Mary Clared was preceded in death by her parents, Claribelle and Edward Coyne and her two brothers, Martin and Patrick. She is survived by several generations of cousins, her SSND community, SSND associates and friends.

Sister Mary Clared is remembered for her energy and creativity. Throughout her 77 years of religious life, she ministered as a music teacher, organist, band director, director of musicals and plays, liturgist, activities director and volunteer. She enriched the many lives of her students, their families, parishioners and sisters in community. She was a long-time member of Mission Pike County, an inter-faith outreach group. She worked with the SSND associates at various locations and was a role model for them. She was a faithful participant in the monthly on-line vocation ministry prayer service.

As she enters eternal life, may she now rejoice in her new life with her God whom she served so faithfully.

*By Sister Carol Marie Wildt, SSND*