

In Loving Memory

Sister Mary Damian Tucker

Sister Mary Damian Tucker, 93, passed away peacefully at Trinity Trace Community Care Center, Covington, Louisiana, September 24, 2023. Sisters were keeping vigil with her when God called her home.

The second child and only daughter was born to Emily (Miranda) and John Tucker, September 20, 1930, in Baton Rouge, Louisiana. She was baptized at St. Anthony Church, September 28, 1930 and named Elizabeth (Betty) Ann. She grew up with four brothers, John, James, George and Roy.

Betty Ann attended St. Anthony Grade School, staffed by the School Sisters of Notre Dame and St. Joseph Academy, staffed by the Sisters of St. Joseph of Carondelet. In her high school years, a vocation talk inspired her to think of becoming a religious sister.

Betty Ann received the candidate's bonnet at her home parish, August 29, 1948, and entered the candidature at Sancta Maria in Ripa, St. Louis, September 1, 1948. During her first year of candidature, she taught grades three and four at St. Francis School, Quincy, Illinois. As a second-year candidate, she taught grades three and four at Holy Family, Hannibal, Missouri. She was received into the novitiate August 1, 1950, and given the name Mary Damian. She professed first vows August 2, 1951, and final vows August 2, 1957.

Sister Mary Damian received a bachelor's degree in history from the former Notre Dame College, St. Louis, in 1964, and a master's degree in elementary administration from Xavier University in New Orleans, in 1973.

After first profession, Sister Mary Damian spent the next 30 years ministering in Louisiana. She was an elementary teacher at Sacred Heart, New Orleans, and Our Lady of Prompt Succor, Chalmette. She was principal at St. Isidore, Baker; St. Pius X, Baton Rouge; Immaculate Conception, Marrero; and Our Lady of Prompt Succor, Chalmette. In these places, she participated in many of the parish activities.

Following a sabbatical, Sister Mary Damian performed community service at St. Mary of the Pines, Chatawa, Mississippi. In 1982, she felt a call to become a special education teacher at Notre Dame of Dallas Special School in Dallas. Three years later, she assumed a variety of administrative responsibilities for the Association for Independent Living (AFIL) in Dallas. She was a resident director, program director and supervisor for AFIL. The Association for Independent Living is a residential program which teaches independent living skills to young adults with intellectual and developmental disabilities. In 1993, she became the facility administrator for the Storey Lane Residence in Dallas. She also served as a counselor for developmentally disabled adults living in the facility and assisted them to live independently. For 19 years, she ministered with these specially challenged young adults.



Birth
September 20, 1930

Baptism
September 28, 1930

Profession
August 2, 1951

Death
September 24, 2023

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

continued

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*Sister Mary Damian
Tucker*



In 2001, Sister Mary Damian became the community coordinator at St. Mary of the Pines, Chatawa, Mississippi. After a term of five years and a sabbatical, she was a pastoral minister at Malta Park, New Orleans, for six years. She then ministered to the homebound at The Pontchartrain in New Orleans, for seven years. Another year of community service at St. Mary of the Pines, Chatawa, Mississippi, was followed by the move to St. Anthony's Gardens, Covington, Louisiana, in 2019. As her health declined, it was a difficult decision to move her from the Memory Unit to Trinity Trace Community Care Center, Covington, Louisiana, in March 2023. She passed away peacefully in the evening of September 24, 2023, four days after her 93rd birthday. Sisters were keeping vigil with her when God called her home. She chose to be cremated.

Funeral services were held October 5, 2023, at Most Holy Trinity Catholic Church. The memorial Mass followed a prayer service, the reading of her biography and sharing of memories. Rev. Rodney Bourg, pastor, was celebrant. Relatives, SSND, SSND associates and friends attended the funeral services. The interment of her cremains was in the Chatawa Cemetery, Chatawa, Mississippi.

Sister Mary Damian is survived by her brother, Roy (Peggy); relatives; her SSND in community; SSND associates; and friends. She was preceded in death by her parents, Emily (Miranda) and John Tucker; and her brothers, John, James and George.

Sister Mary Damian was a fun-loving person and a delightful community member. She was a prayerful person and had a special devotion to the Baby Jesus, whose birthday she celebrated the 25th of each month. She was deeply devoted to her family and shared many happy times with them. She had a great love and appreciation for her students, especially those with developmental disabilities. May she now rejoice with her God, as she enters eternal life and is blessed for her many years of loving service to God's little ones.

By Carol Marie Wildt, SSND

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