



Birth
September 30, 1939

Baptism
October 8, 1939

Profession
July 30, 1959

Death
October 24, 2021

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 Rose Ann (M. Benjamin) Bacak

Rose Ann Bacak was born in Kerrville, Texas, on September 30, 1939. She was the fifth child born to John Benjamin and Mary Bettie Polanski Bacak. The family, who had grown to eight children, sent those who were old enough to Notre Dame Elementary School in Kerrville. When Rose Ann was about ten years old, the Bacaks moved to Alice, Texas.

While in Alice, the Bacaks continued their elementary education at St. Elizabeth's School. Rose Ann attended William Adams High School in Alice. She had long felt the desire to become a religious sister. Following graduation from high school, she entered the candidature for the School Sisters of Notre Dame (SSND) at Sancta Maria in Ripa, St. Louis, on August 25, 1957. She was received into the novitiate on July 29, 1958, and was given the name Mary Benjamin. She professed first vows on July 30, 1959, and final vows on July 30, 1965.

She earned a bachelor's degree in economics and business education from the former Notre Dame College, St. Louis, in 1962. After graduation, she began her life's ministry of teaching and using the skills that she had learned.

In the early part of Sister Benjamin's professional life, she taught high school students the useful skills of typing, shorthand and bookkeeping; skills they would need in their further studies in their business and personal lives. In her religion classes, they would imbibe the attitudes, character traits and qualities they would need as they applied those skills. She taught in Louisiana in Marrero at the former Immaculata High School, and in Baton Rouge at Redemptorist High School. She also taught in Texas at Houston's Mount Carmel High School.

In the mid-70s, she returned to her baptismal name, Rose Ann. Another significant change would shape the rest of her professional life. Sister Rose Ann's future calling would be as an administrative assistant in educational endeavors other than in the classroom. She would apply the skills she had taught others to assist the administrators in schools and the province.

Sister Rose Ann still served in three southern states. In Texas, she assisted at St. Mary School in Brownsville and the Provincial Leadership in Irving. She added Mississippi to the list as she assisted the administrators at St. Francis School in Brookhaven, St. Mary School in Jackson and St. Mary of the Pines in Chatawa. In Canton, at the Notre Dame Education Center, Sister Rose Ann continued as an administrative assistant but also returned part-time to the classroom as she prepared adults to attain a secondary school diploma.

After 50 years as an educator in the classroom, and as a support to the education endeavor, in 2011, Sister Rose Ann retired partially to St. Mary of the Pines retirement center in Chatawa, Mississippi. She brought her exactness and her kindness, her eagerness to assist and her faithfulness in prayer and activities to the SSND community in Chatawa.

At 80 years, and still physically active, Sister Rose Ann was transferred with all

continued

In Loving Memory



Sister Rose Ann Bacak

of the Chatawa School Sisters of Notre Dame to the senior living facility at St. Anthony's Gardens in Covington, Louisiana. The rapid decline of her health in her last months brought a great awareness of her illness with acceptance and trust in God's plan for her. She slipped away to her God in the peacefulness of that great trust. Sister Rose Ann Bacak died in the early morning of Sunday, October 24, 2021.

Prayer and visitation for Sister Rose Ann were held on October 28, 2021, at Most Holy Trinity Church, Covington, Louisiana. The Eucharistic Celebration followed with Rev. Rodney Bourg, pastor as the celebrant. Burial was in the SSND Cemetery in Chatawa, Mississippi; the Knights of Columbus, Most Holy Trinity Council no. 14614, served as pallbearers.

Sister Rose Ann is survived by her sister Bettie Ofela of Corpus Christi, Texas, and by many nieces and nephews. She was preceded in death by her parents, four brothers and two sisters.

By Sister MarieClare Powell, SSND

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