

# In Loving Memory

## Sister Theresa Marie Dietz



Birth  
January 5, 1930

Baptism  
January 15, 1930

Profession  
July 29, 1950

Death  
October 29, 2020

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

The Dietz family welcomed their youngest child, Theresa Marie, on June 5, 1930. Anthony and Angela (Dierkes) Dietz named their second daughter in honor of St. Theresa, the Little Flower, as she was baptized the following week in Saints Peter and Paul Church in St. Louis.

All seven of them, parents and children, attended Saints Peter and Paul elementary school taught by the School Sisters of Notre Dame. All except mom, Angela, were learners in Sister Antonette Linnemann's classroom. She taught only boys the year Angela would have had her for a teacher. Of her own school days and her vocation, Theresa wrote, "I believe I received my call to religious life when I was in the third grade. I often visited the Blessed Sacrament during recess...Beginning in seventh grade, I saw much of the Sisters' life as I helped in their laundry on Saturdays. I went there after the 6 a.m. Mass and worked the mangle until 4:00 p.m. in the evening. I attended Notre Dame High School and planned to take all the subjects I could each semester so I would have enough credits to enter the convent without finishing my senior year. I succeeded in my plan but my mother was not happy about my rushing through that last year; my father persuaded her. Then she said she'd not stand in my way of entering the candidature early."

Theresa entered the School Sisters of Notre Dame candidature at Sancta Maria in Ripa, in St. Louis on August 27, 1947. Toward the end of the second year as a candidate, Theresa did her practice teaching at St. Mary of Victories School in St. Louis. Returning to the motherhouse, Theresa anticipated and was permitted to attend the ordination and first Mass of her brother Norb (later Msgr. Norbert Dietz). It was her first visit back to the family and the parish since entering the candidature two years earlier.

Now it was time for her reception into the novitiate on July 28, 1949. At this point, she received the SSND habit and she was given the name she had requested to honor both her mother and father - Anthony Ann. The novitiate year went by quickly; on July 29, 1950, Sister Anthony Ann professed her vows as a School Sister of Notre Dame. She earned a B. A. in Art from the former Notre Dame College, St. Louis, in 1956; then an M.A. in Art from the University of Notre Dame in 1963.

Sister Anthony Ann spent more than four decades of teaching mostly art and math to both elementary and secondary school youth. She summarized this teaching journey, "I began my southern sojourn after my first year of teaching at St. Peter Cathedral in Belleville, Illinois, then to St. Joseph, Ponchatoula, Louisiana, then to St. Gerard, Baton Rouge, St. Francis deSales, St. Louis and Notre Dame High School in Quincy, Illinois. I again went South to St. Mary of the Pines in Chatawa, Mississippi for nine years. My other years were spent in St. Gerard High School, San Antonio, Texas and Sacred Heart High School, Morrilton, Arkansas. It was suggested that those with masculine names return to their baptismal names, so I went as Sister Theresa to Salpointe Catholic High School in Tucson, Arizona. Teaching in Arizona rounded out my tour of teaching in five of the six states in the Southern Province at that time. In addition to art and math, I taught religion and special English – even French for a semester.

*continued*

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*Sister Theresa Marie Dietz*



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I most enjoyed helping slower students before and after school."

Providence and the need for a person with math skills brought Sister Theresa back to St. Mary of the Pines for almost three decades. During those twenty-eight years, Theresa worked in large programs and tiny projects where ever she was needed. All the while attracting by her prayerful presence so many among her community members, her former students, and new acquaintances.

Having acquired computer skills in digitizing the accounts, it was timely that she became computer consultant to sisters of the province who needed help in using the important tool. She authored a page "Lite Byte" in "Update," the province monthly periodical.

Around the turn of the century, Theresa left the finance office to do her own art work in her discretionary time. "I do paint in oil, acrylic and watercolor. I have sandblasted glass; I have done some woodcarvings and a large mural painting for the retreat center. My mission, I believe, is to do whatever is needed if I can get it accomplished doing whatever I thought was God's will for me." A chronic condition limited most activity during the last months of her life at Chatawa.

God's will for her at the end of her life seemed a strange wait. With the other thirty members of the St. Mary of the Pines community, Sister was assisted in preparing to leave St. Mary of the Pines. However she, with three other sisters requiring skilled care, would need to wait a few months until the skilled care facility at Trinity Trace was completed. When they were ready to move in March, the COVID-19 pandemic regulations precluded such a move. Seven months later, when prohibitions were lifted, Sister Theresa traveled from St. Mary of the Pines. On October 29, 2020, just a week after her arrival at Trinity Trace, Sister slipped peacefully into her eternal journey.

Sister Theresa was preceded in death by her parents and her three brothers. She is survived by her sister Rita Marie Schnur of St. Louis, Missouri and by a number of nieces and nephews.

Services for Sister Theresa were in Most Holy Trinity Catholic Church, Covington, Louisiana, on Wednesday, November 4, 2020. Visitation and prayer service were followed by the Eucharistic Celebration. Rev. Rodney Bourg, pastor, was the celebrant. Internment was at the St. Mary of the Pines Cemetery, in Chatawa, Mississippi.

*By Sister MarieClare Powell, SSND*



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