Birth
May 9, 1939

Baptism
June 1, 1939

Profession
July 30, 1959

Death
June 25, 2025

Burial
Sancta Maria in Ripa
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

In Loving Memory

Sister Miriam (Miriam Victor) Jansen

Sister Miriam (Miriam Victor) Jansen, 86, passed away peacefully in the early morning of June 25, 2025, at St. Louis University Hospital, St. Louis.

Twin girls were born in St. Ann's Hospital, St. Louis, on May 9, 1939. They were baptized on June 1, 1939, in the Immaculate Conception chapel at St. Ann's Hospital. They were named Irene and Alice after the nurses who cared for them. The sisters spent the first nine months of their lives at the Catholic Children's Home in Alton, Illinois, staffed by the Sister Adorers of the Precious Blood. Since they were the only twins in the orphanage, they were the center of attention. The chaplain began looking for a permanent home for the twins and was determined to keep them together. He reached out to various priests in the Alton area asking them if they knew of any Catholic couple who would be interested in adopting children. Father Brune, the pastor of St. Mary's parish, approached Victor and Rose Mary Jansen and urged them to visit the twins. At the age of nine months, on Easter Sunday, the pair left the Children's Home with their new parents. They were the first set of twins adopted in Madison County, Illinois.

Irene and Alice enjoyed a very happy childhood and did everything together. Their parents made many sacrifices to insure they received a Catholic education. They attended St. Mary's Grade School, staffed by the School Sisters of Notre Dame (SSND) and Marquette High School staffed by the Ursuline Sisters.

Irene loved the sisters, and even as a young student in grade school, felt drawn to join them. The girls' father died when they were juniors in high school. Following graduation, Irene asked her mother to enter SSND. Her mother found this very difficult to accept, but supported her, and encouraged by her twin, Alice, she applied.

Irene entered the candidature at Sancta Maria in Ripa on August 29, 1957. She was received into the novitiate on July 29,1958 and given the name Miriam Victor in memory of her father. At her reception, her mother expressed her happiness about Irene's decision. Her mother passed away four months later in November. She was professed on July 30, 1959, with her twin, Alice, as the only family member present. She professed final vows on July 30, 1965.

Sister Miriam began her lengthy education career by teaching primary children at Holy Rosary School, Houma, Louisiana, and Sacred Heart, Rich Fountain, Missouri. She taught intermediate grades at St. Martin, Jefferson City, Missouri; St. Augustine, Breese, Illinois and Immaculate Conception, West Alton, Missouri.

In 1972, she was appointed superintendent of schools in the Jefferson City, Missouri diocese – the first woman appointed to this position. In 1979, she was elected provincial leader of the former St. Louis Province and served for two terms. During that time the General Council asked her to co-lead a two-year international seminar focused on the congregation's ministry directed

continued

In Loving Memory

Sister Miriam
(Miriam Victor) Jansen

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School Sisters of Notre Dame
Central Pacific Province

Transforming the world through education

toward education which culminated in the publication of "A Way to the Future: Directions in SSND Education." After a year of study at Harvard University, she was a consultant for Global Education Associates in New York. She then became the curriculum coordinator for the newly established Sister Thea Bowman Catholic School in East St. Louis, Illinois.

In 1992, she became director of international programs at the College of Notre Dame of Maryland (now University) in Baltimore, Maryland. She served in this position for 19 years. Leaving higher education, she continued to do consulting work, within and beyond SSND, including as a presenter at the SSND Global Education Commission gathering in Rome in early 2025. She participated in developing new models for ministry sponsorship for the Central Pacific and Atlantic Midwest SSND provinces and mentored leaders of SSND ministries. After more than 30 years serving in the Atlantic Midwest Province, she moved "home" to the Midwest and back to St. Louis in August 2024.

Sister Miriam received a bachelor's degree in speech from the former Notre Dame College, St. Louis, in 1962; a master's degree in education from Ball State University, Muncie, Indiana, in 1974 and a master's degree focusing on global/international education from Harvard University, Cambridge, Massachusetts in 1989.

In June 2025, she was admitted to St. Louis University Hospital. The medical staff determined they could do nothing more for her and she chose to enter hospice. She passed away peacefully in the early morning of June 25, 2025, with her faithful friend, Sister Ann Scholz, SSND, at her bedside. She chose to be cremated.

Memorial services were held on July 23, 2025, at Sancta Maria in Ripa. Sharing of memories preceded the Mass of Resurrection with Msgr. Gregory Higley of the Jefferson City, Missouri diocese as presider. Her twin sister, Alice Reinecke, nieces, nephews, extended family members, friends, classmates, colleagues from Jefferson City and Baltimore, School Sisters of Notre Dame and SSND associates attended the service. Her cremains were buried in the Sancta Maria in Ripa cemetery in the center circle reserved for the former St. Louis provincial leaders.

Sister Miriam was preceded in death by her parents, Rose Mary and Victor Jansen. She is survived by her twin, Alice (Bob) Reinecke, nieces, nephews and their families, School Sisters of Notre Dame and SSND Associates.

Sister Miriam was an outstanding educator, leader and organizer and deeply committed to Catholic education. She touched lives around the world and inspired many by her gentle strength, her love for her twin and her family, her SSND family and countless students and colleagues. She was a welcoming presence to the international students and helped them in their transition to life at Notre Dame of Maryland. May she now rest in the arms of the God she served so faithfully for 66 years as she enters eternal life.

By Sister Carol Marie Wildt, SSND