In Loving Memory

Birth
July 11, 1937

Baptism
July 25, 1937

Profession
August 3, 1957

Death
September 10, 2025

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 Marie Dorez Mehrtens

Sister Marie Dorez Mehrtens, 88, passed away peacefully on September 10, 2025, at Trinity Trace Community Care Center in Covington, Louisiana.

The second of six children was born to Marie (Toups) and Herman Mehrtens in New Orleans, on July 11, 1937. She was baptized on July 25, 1937, at Our Lady of Lourdes Church and named Agnes Claire. The family would eventually grow to include a total of five girls and one boy.

Agnes attended Incarnate Word Grade School in New Orleans and Redemptorist High School, which was staffed by the School Sisters of Notre Dame (SSND). She enjoyed dancing and having a good time with her friends. As graduation grew nearer, she felt a call to enter religious life. The summer after graduation, she was employed as a bookkeeper for an insurance company hoping to stifle the call and continue life with her boyfriend. However, the call became stronger, and she applied for admission into the candidature.

Agnes received the candidate bonnet at the Redemptorist convent on August 30, 1955. The next day, she traveled to Sancta Maria in Ripa in St. Louis, to begin her formation years. She was received into the novitiate on August 1, 1956, and given the name Marie Dorez. Her parents and three of her sisters attended the ceremony. She professed first vows on August 3, 1957, in St. Louis, and final vows on August 3, 1963, at St. Mary of the Pines, Chatawa, Mississippi.

Sister Marie Dorez received a bachelor's degree in English from the former Notre Dame College, St. Louis, in 1960 and a master's degree in administration from Ball State University in Muncie, Indiana, in 1973.

Sister Marie Dorez spent 20 years of ministry in Catholic education. Beginning in 1957, she taught primary children for twelve years at Sacred Heart, Du Quoin, Illinois; St. Gerard Majella, San Antonio, Texas and St. Gregory Nongraded School, Tyler, Texas. In 1969, she was called to be principal of two schools in Fort Worth, Texas, and tasked with combining them into one school. After two years, St. Peter School was established. Two years later, she became the elementary supervisor for the Diocese of Dallas.

In 1977, she was elected as a provincial councilor for the former Dallas province. She served two terms, and was then elected provincial leader

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of the former Dallas Province in 1985, a testament to her skills and abilities in leadership. She served two terms in this role, and then spent a sabbatical year at the Center for Spiritual Development in Bird Island, Minnesota. While in Bird Island, she received certification as a spiritual director. She remained there two years as a staff member.

During this time, she discerned a call to minister at the Retreat Center in Sunyani, Ghana, West Africa. In the fall of 1996, she journeyed to Ghana. Two years later, she became a co-director of the newly established District of Africa novitiate in Sunyani.

Returning to the United States in 2010 and after a short sabbatical, she returned to the retreat center in Chatawa as a staff member. After a ministry of ten years, she relocated to Dallas, where she was a spiritual director at St. Rita Parish. The following year, she moved to St. Anthony's Gardens in Covington, Louisiana and continued her ministry as spiritual director.

In August 2025, she hospitalization and then moved to Trinity Trace Community Care Center. In early September 2025 was placed in hospice. She passed away peacefully in the morning of September 10, 2025. She chose to be cremated.

Funeral services were held on September 22, 2025, at Most Holy Trinity Catholic Church, Covington. Visitation, prayer service and sharing of memories preceded the memorial Mass with Rev. Rodney Bourg as presider. Family members, friends, SSND and SSND associates attended the services. Her cremains were buried in the Chatawa Cemetery, Chatawa, Mississippi.

She was preceded in death by her parents, Marie and Herman Mehrtens. She is survived by her sisters Marie Borrello, Katherine Fahy, Janet Rayan and Elizabeth Mehrtens and her brother Herman Mehrtens.

Sister Marie Dorez was a woman of many talents. She served in education, was in provincial leadership, companioned others in spiritual direction, was a missionary and novice directress. She is remembered as a woman with a generous and selfless heart who had a radiant smile. Her years of leadership in the former Dallas Province and in the novitiate in Africa left a legacy of dedication, kindness and joy. The wisdom she taught by her life was rooted in her deep love of God and for those she met and to whom she ministered. Her commitment to SSND was visible by the example of her life. May she now rejoice in her new life with her God whom she served so faithfully during her 68 years of religious life.

By Sister Carol Marie Wildt, SSND

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Central Pacific Province

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