

Death Notice

SISTER MARY RENEE

ND 6107

Nancy Jo NIENABER



Immaculate Heart of Mary Province, Covington, Kentucky, USA

Date and Place of Birth	August 18, 1946	Covington, KY
Date and Place of Profession	August 16, 1967	Covington, KY
Date and Place of Death	February 1, 2015	Covington, KY
Date and Place of Funeral	February 6, 2015	Park Hills, KY

Nancy Nienaber was born into the family of Joseph and Hilda Brueggeman Nienaber. Their six children included two girls and four boys. There was a very Catholic family as they lived two doors down from St. Benedict Church where Nancy often attended services and stopped by for a visit. Her elementary years were spent at St. Benedict School. The Nienaber family had many relatives in the religious life. As she wrote, "I grew up surrounded by people of faith, so it was easy for me to develop a personal relationship with God."

This relationship developed into a religious vocation to the Sisters of Notre Dame whom she encountered at Notre Dame Academy during high school years. The teachers "taught us well, loved us deeply, had time for us, and encouraged us to pray in chapel each day." After high school, Sister Mary Renee entered the Notre Dame Community and was professed on August 16, 1967.

Sister Mary Renee held three major ministries, for which she was well prepared. She received Master's degrees: in Education from Xavier University, in Religious Studies from Notre Dame Institute, and in Christian Spirituality from Creighton University. She was also certified in spiritual direction/retreat direction.

The first degree prepared her for classroom teaching in elementary and high school. Following these years, Sister spent 24 years in adult faith formation. Twenty-one of those years were given to St. Mary Parish in Alexandria. She loved being a Director of Religious Education, especially directing the R.C.I.A. classes.

In addition Sister Mary Renee gave presentations, planned retreats in various parishes and other places. In most recent years she was blessed to be a spiritual director and director of retreats: directed, guided, and shorter ones. Her articles on spiritual topics were published in periodicals and in the diocesan newspaper. In 2000, Sister became the director of the Associate program for the Covington province, which she continued for fourteen years.

Sister Mary Renee had many friends and acquaintances through the contacts she made over the years. She could be recognized by her characteristic laugh and joyful spirit. In November of 2014, Sister was diagnosed with a terminal illness which she accepted with a ready "yes" to God's will. Over the next weeks an outpouring of prayer and support came from sisters, relatives and friends.

Sister waited patiently for the Bridegroom to take her to himself. Finally she quietly breathed her last on Sunday morning, February 1, 2015. She donated her body to science. Because of the large number of persons attending the memorial Mass, it was held at St. Agnes Parish. May God continue to be her joy forever.