

Death Notice

SISTER JEANMARIE ND 4054

Marita Elizabeth Ann DECHANT
(natural sister of Sister Rosemarie)

Christ the King Province, Chardon, Ohio, USA



Date and Place of Birth:	January 11, 1927	Sheffield, Ohio
Date and Place of Profession:	August 16, 1946	Cleveland, Ohio
Date and Place of Death:	July 7, 2018	Health Care Center, Chardon, Ohio
Date and Place of Funeral:	July 12, 2018	Provincial Center, Chardon, Ohio
Date and Place of Burial:	July 12, 2018	Resurrection Cemetery, Chardon, Ohio

“For God and the World...Building a Bridge of Love”

The life of Sister Jeanmarie (affectionately known as Betty Ann by her family) was gifted with God’s surprises and magnanimous love which overflowed into her family and her Notre Dame community life. Born the third of six children to Hubert and Rose (Conrad) Dechant, Betty Ann worked tirelessly on the family farm; she had a deep love for her parents, her siblings and all of nature. Life on the farm taught her patience and helped prepare her for the responsibilities of life. Early on, she developed a sense of initiative, compassion and cheerfulness. After graduating from St. Teresa of Avila Elementary School in Sheffield, she attended Brookside High School for two years. She delighted in learning, and was encouraged and challenged by both her father and her teachers. Being an avid and precocious reader, while still in high school, she was given college texts in literature to read. In her junior year, Betty Ann registered as an aspirant at Notre Dame Academy in Cleveland and entered the Sisters of Notre Dame on February 2, 1944. At investment she received the name Sister Mary Jeanmarie.

Sister earned a bachelor’s degree in chemistry from Notre Dame College in South Euclid, Ohio, and a doctoral degree in physical chemistry from the Catholic University of America in Washington, D.C. Although she began her teaching career in elementary and high school, Sister Jeanmarie is most noted, remembered, and loved for her ministry at Notre Dame College where she taught chemistry for more than fifty years. Her kindness and skill in teaching instilled confidence in her students to succeed in science, medicine, research and industry. Sister developed innovative science programs for high school, traditional age and adult students. She was chosen to participate as an extramural associate at the National Institutes of Health in Bethesda, Maryland. At each institution she attended, both her dedication to learning and her scholarship were recognized and appreciated.

After retirement from Notre Dame College, Sister Jeanmarie continued to tutor students in chemistry, other sciences, and mathematics at Lorain County Community College. When she became unable to drive, students came to the convent for help! Sister kept her mind active and up-to-date on current events and tried to learn something new each day. Along with these endeavors, she lovingly shared her final years with her younger sister, Sister Rosemarie.

In the past several years, Sister Jeanmarie suffered declining health, and overcame many crises with quiet determination. An upbeat spirit and attitude of gratitude characterized her. Sister was a woman of prayer who cherished her community, her large family, her many friends, colleagues and students—everyone she touched each day. Sister Jeanmarie was welcomed into eternity as quietly and peacefully as she had lived. May she delight in the presence of our good and loving God for all eternity.