

Death Notice

SISTER JEANNE MARY
(formerly Sister Mary Jane Frances)

ND 4380



Gloria Jeanne NIEMINEN

Immaculate Conception Province, USA

Date and Place of Birth:	December 25, 1928	Cleveland, Ohio
Date and Place of Profession:	August 16, 1949	Cleveland, Ohio
Date and Place of Death:	July 8, 2022	Health Care Center, Chardon, Ohio
Date and Place of Burial:	July 22, 2022	Resurrection Cemetery, Chardon, Ohio

“With joy and simplicity of heart...”

Born on Christmas Day, Gloria Jeanne was the middle daughter of Niles and Stella (Lazarski) Nieminen. No religion was practiced in the home, but her parents deeply loved their family and nurtured goodness and kindness. Gloria was quite proud of her father, a steward on a Great Lakes iron ore boat, who was an honest man with a great sense of humor. Her mother shared a special, unique wisdom.

Through the invitation of a neighbor, Gloria visited Mother of Sorrows Church in Ashtabula, Ohio. She wrote, “I was in awe and experienced God’s presence in the same way as when I gazed up into a star-filled sky.” She took instructions, was baptized and received her First Communion in February 1945. It was here at Mother of Sorrows that she met the Sisters of Notre Dame, and the desire to become a sister took root in her heart. Gloria worked for a time after high school graduation and then entered as a postulant on February 2, 1947. At investment she received the name Sister Mary Jane Frances.

Sister Jeanne Mary earned a bachelor’s degree in education from St. John College in Cleveland and a master’s degree from St. Xavier College in Chicago, Illinois. She was a master teacher of primary grade children, committed to finding the best ways to help them learn. Her understanding and compassionate heart was open to all; Jesus was always the focus of what she was about. One of her greatest joys was preparing her students for the reception of First Holy Communion. Sister’s lively optimism and loving manner endeared her to the children, their families and the sisters with whom she lived. Her ministry in the primary grades spanned forty-five years – years in which she not only taught lessons in math and phonics, but lessons about life and love as well.

In 1978 Sister was asked to co-author the *Christ Our Life* religion series for grades 1-3. She also authored the text for kindergarten and later assisted in the revision of the primary texts. Her classroom experience and expertise were invaluable. Sister’s ministry in education continued to broaden as she worked with adult literacy, especially for Vietnamese refugees. When she retired from formal classroom teaching, Sister Jeanne Mary became a dedicated tutor at the Notre Dame Skills Lab, a position she treasured for fourteen years. She wrote, “I experience genuine joy and satisfaction in helping these children who need a little additional support to succeed.”

As her energy and health began to decline, Sister moved to the provincial center in 2012 and continued to be God’s instrument. Joyful simplicity characterized this unassuming, hard working, prayerful woman. Her genuine and warm smile, gracious and gentle demeanor made everyone welcome in her presence. May Sister Jeanne Mary rest in God’s loving embrace.