

Death Notice

SISTER MARY JOANNE ND 5282

(formerly Sister Mary Ann José)

Joanne Mary Frances BONCZEK



Immaculate Conception Province, USA

Date and Place of Birth:	July 31, 1938	Cleveland, Ohio
Date and Place of Profession:	August 16, 1959	Cleveland, Ohio
Date and Place of Death:	May 25, 2022	Health Care Center, Chardon, Ohio
Date and Place of Burial:	June 2, 2022	Resurrection Cemetery, Chardon, Ohio

Joanne was the eldest of the four girls and two boys born to Joseph and Anna (Buiting) Bonczek. She reflected, “My parents provided us with a rich religious and cultural background blended together in a home permeated with peace and love.” Music was a second language; all were gifted singers or played musical instruments. “The house echoed with song from morning until night.” It was this environment that prompted Joanne to respond to God’s invitation to share his love with others in religious life. She attended St. Agnes Elementary School in Elyria and Elyria District Catholic High School. After graduation, Joanne entered the Sisters of Notre Dame on September 8, 1956, and at investment received the name Sister Mary Ann José.

Sister Mary Joanne earned a bachelor’s degree in education from St. John College in Cleveland and a master’s degree in administration from John Carroll University, University Heights, Cleveland. She taught junior high grades for ten years before serving as principal for 19 years. Her talents, energy and dedication, whether in the classroom or the office, were characterized by warmth and concern, contagious joy and a zest for living. She was innovative and forward-thinking. One pastor described her as “a tireless dynamo serving the children, parishioners and staff.”

As the Supervisor of Elementary Education for the Diocese of Arlington, Virginia, from 1976-1982, Sister Mary Joanne had many opportunities to share her talents and educational expertise. She was committed to Catholic education on all levels and was instrumental in implementing a variety of programs and approaches to learning.

On weekends, Sister Mary Joanne traveled near and far giving workshops for the *Christ Our Life* religion series authored by the Sisters of Notre Dame. Practical ideas for utilizing the lesson plan material more effectively and integrating music in the religious experiences of the children were key. Catechists and parents were inspired by her enthusiasm and creative energy. She organized and directed a choir of about forty Sisters in the northern Virginia area, the “Singing Sisters,” for choral concert presentations at various parishes.

In 2000, Sister moved to Florida to be a caregiver for her mother; she also entered into a new ministry in Donor Relations for Food for the Poor, an ecumenical Christian organization providing services in Latin America and the Caribbean. As Senior Development Advisor, her compassionate heart and outgoing personality enabled her to reach thousands of people.

For the past four years, Sister Mary Joanne has shared her joyful spirit at the provincial center as assistant for activities and pastoral care. She wrote, “Throughout life’s many challenges and opportunities, Jesus has been with me and continues to uplift and strengthen me while blessing the work of my heart, hands and voice.” May she enter into eternal life with a joyful song!