

In Loving Memory

Sister Mary André Aubuchon



Birth
August 17, 1932

Baptism
August 28, 1932

Profession
August 2, 1954

Death
October 27, 2024

Burial
Sancta Maria in Ripa
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 Mary André Aubuchon, 92, passed away peacefully on October 27, 2024, at Anna House, The Sarah Community, in Bridgeton, Missouri.

She was the second of five children for Mary Catherine (Jennemann) and Andrew Aubuchon, born in the family home in St. Louis on August 17, 1932. She was baptized on August 28, 1932, at Our Lady of Perpetual Help Church in St. Louis, and named Mary Jean Frances. She grew up with her two sisters and two brothers.

Mary Jean attended Our Lady of Perpetual Help Grade School where she met the School Sisters of Notre Dame (SSND). She spent summer vacation days helping the sisters get ready for the next school year. As a seventh grader, she was able to help them do sacristy work. She attended St. Alphonsus (Rock) High School in St. Louis, which was also staffed by SSND. During her freshman and sophomore years, she was employed by the Carmelite Sisters in Clayton, Missouri, doing domestic and sacristy work on Saturdays. During this time, her desire to become a religious sister was deepened, but she did not feel drawn to the life of a cloistered nun.

In her sophomore year, her father underwent surgery for the removal of a lung due to cancer. He suffered for two years before God called him home during her senior year. This left the family with many expensive doctor bills and financial challenges. While Mary Jean desired to enter SSND, she felt that she needed to remain home to help the family. She was employed as a bookkeeper with Laclede Gas Company. After conditions improved at home, she was able to enter SSND.

Mary Jean entered at Sancta Maria in Ripa on August 28, 1951. She spent the next two years attending college classes. She was received into the novitiate on August 1, 1953, and given the name Mary André in honor of her parents: Mary was her mother's name and André is the French form of her father's name. She professed first vows on August 2, 1954, and final vows on August 2, 1960.

Sister Mary André earned a bachelor's degree in history from the former Notre Dame College, St. Louis, in 1956 and a master's degree in history from the University of Notre Dame, South Bend, Indiana, in 1967.

During her second year in the juniorate, Sister Mary André was missioned to teach primary children at St. Liborius, St. Louis, to replace a sister who was ill. For the next 40 years of her teaching career, she taught in secondary schools across several midwestern states. In Missouri, she taught at Rosati-Kain High School, St. Alphonsus (Rock) High School, Rosary High School and Cardinal Ritter Prep High School in St. Louis.

continued

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She taught at Teutopolis Community High School in Teutopolis, Illinois; Quincy Notre Dame High School in Quincy, Illinois, and Notre Dame High School in Burlington, Iowa.

In 1971, she received a Fullbright Scholarship to study and travel in India for two months. As a result of this experience, she felt a great desire to become a missionary. In 1973, the former St. Louis Province sent four sisters to Yengema, Sierra Leone, West Africa. They were to open a division for girls in the all-boys school. Sister Mary André was one of the pioneers and was the head mistress of the girls' division for the next three years. She then returned to the United States.

In 1990, she returned to Sierra Leone and taught at Kabala Secondary School for five years. The civil war in 1995 forced the sisters to leave Sierra Leone. After a short stay in the United States, she was able to go to Ghana and teach at the Notre Dame Girls Senior High School in Sunyani for two years. She returned to the U.S. for a short time for health reasons. Returning to Ghana in 1998, she served as the secretary to the District Leader in Nsawam for a term of five years.

After a period of renewal in 2003, she served as a volunteer at the former Notre Dame Tutorial (Learning) Center on the Sancta Maria in Ripa campus in St. Louis and at Cardinal Ritter Prep High School. In 2015, she performed community service at Theresa Center. She was missioned to Veronica House, The Sarah Community, Bridgeton, Missouri, in 2018 and to Anna House in 2021. She was placed in hospice care in early October 2024. She died peacefully in the early evening of October 27, 2024, at Anna House.

A prayer service was held at The Sarah Community on October 30, 2024. The next morning, funeral services were held at Theresa Center, Sancta Maria in Ripa: visitation, reading of her biography, sharing of memories and the Mass of Resurrection with Rev. Michael Joyce, CM as presider. Family members, classmates, sisters in community, SSND associates and friends attended the services. Burial was in the Sancta Maria in Ripa cemetery.

Sister Mary André is survived by her brother, James, nieces, nephews, School Sisters of Notre Dame, SSND associates and friends. She was preceded in death by her parents: Mary Catherine and Andrew Aubuchon, her sisters Julie (Roy) Brown, Dorothy Marie Aubuchon and her brother John.

She was remembered as an excellent educator who challenged and inspired her students. She was also a mentor to other teachers as she shared her experience and knowledge with them. In community, she was a gentle person who supported others with her thoughtfulness and encouragement. She had a missionary heart and shared the Good News of Jesus whenever she had an opportunity. May she now rejoice in her new life with her God whom she served so faithfully during her 70 years as a School Sister of Notre Dame.

By Sister Carol Marie Wildt, SSND

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