



SISTER MARY DORAN, OLVN, died peacefully on Sunday, September 15, 2019, in Rancho Mirage, California. She had just celebrated her 85th birthday on September 11.

Sister Mary was born in Ludlow, Kentucky on September 11, 1934, to Charles Doran and Lillian Kohnen Doran. She was baptized Mary Theresa on September 23, 1934, at Saint James Church. Mary was the second of five children and the oldest of three girls. John Doran, her elder brother, preceded her in death. Her two sisters, Patricia Brauer and Eileen Northcutt, and younger brother James Doran of Las Vegas, Nevada, survive Sister.

After high school, while working for an insurance company, Mary realized that although she knew several religious communities, she wanted something different. It was only after seeing an advertisement for Victory Noll in Our Sunday Visitor newspaper showing an OLVN Sister sitting under a tree teaching children that she thought this was the one. The next ad showed all the places their Sisters did ministry. That confirmed her decision, because she had a desire for travel. She entered the Congregation of Our Lady of Victory Missionary Sisters on January 6, 1953, and made first vows on August 5, 1955. She took the name Sister Therese Ann, but returned to her baptismal name of Mary in 1968 after Vatican II. Her first mission was San Fernando, California. She also served in several other places in California, then to Indiana, Florida, and Arizona, before returning to California where she resided until her death.

Sister Mary spent 25 years ministering in all levels of Religious Education, from classroom teacher to Director of Parish and Diocesan Religious Education departments. In 1968, she received her Bachelor of Arts degree from Ursuline College in Louisville, Kentucky. Four years later, while serving as a Congregational Councilor and Area Coordinator for the Eastern Midwest, she earned her Master of Arts degree in Religious Education from the University of Detroit.

In 1982, Sister Mary left religious education and began to work for and with the United Farm Workers. It was in this ministry that she once said, "My work in the UFW has made me more deeply aware of our need to trust in the Lord. There are many times when no one will listen to complaints of injustice."

After working for several years with the UFW, Sister Mary began to minister to Our Lady of Soledad parish in Coachella, California, assisting low-income people through the CARE program. The CARE program provided weekly visits from someone who would listen to their needs and concerns. It was in this ministry where she soon learned there were other needs besides food and clothing. After much prayer and soul-searching, she decided to redirect her ministry and she became a certified paralegal by completing a course at Chapman University in Palm Desert, California. In 1994, she joined the Inland

Counties Legal Services (ICLS) at their office in Indio, California. As a non-profit agency, ICLS offered free services to low-income people who need help in many areas dealing with benefits for those who are disabled, unemployed or have other legal issues. Sister Mary's task was to interview and review all the documents pertaining to the issue and to represent the client before a judge, doctor or vocational expert. Many of the clients were Hispanic and held only permanent resident papers. Sister Mary encouraged them to become United States citizens. It was a ministry Sister Mary found to be very rewarding and she used her many gifts. She mentioned that while her work as a paralegal was very intense and sometimes she did not get favorable decisions for her clients, she still thanked God that she could be of help. She said. "Many clients leave thanking us and saying how grateful they are for the services offered here at ICLS."

Even after fully retiring from ICLS, she continued to help a few people by answering questions or giving advice on what one could do next. Sister Lucille Martinez, who was with Sister Mary during her final days, mentioned how many of Sister Mary's former clients and friends called. They wanted to express how grateful they were to her for all she had done for them.

We gathered on October 4, 2019, for the wake of Sister Mary, sharing stories of how she was a dedicated social justice advocate and a generous host. Father Phil DeVolder quoted Mary at the end of his funeral homily with these words: "My life as a Victory Noll Sister continues into the future with hope. Although not always able to change the situation, we do try to give hope to people suffering from unjust treatment ... While the struggle continues we rejoice that hope in the Lord is alive among us."

Sister Mary, your struggles have ended and your greatest adventure has begun. Your desire for travel was fulfilled in many ways that you could never have dreamed of in Ludlow, Kentucky. You have been a faithful servant of the gospel and now may the faith that continued to give you hope be rewarded with eternal life.

With gratitude and blessings,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Sr. Ginger Downey OLM". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Sr. Ginger Downey, OLM