

Death Notice

SISTER MARY ND 5281
(formerly Sister Mary Paul René)



Mary Joyce POPOCZY

Immaculate Conception Province, USA

Date and Place of Birth:	July 29, 1938	Crooksville, Ohio
Date and Place of Profession:	August 16, 1959	Cleveland, Ohio
Date and Place of Death:	October 5, 2025	Health Care Center, Chardon, Ohio
Date and Place of Burial:	October 17, 2025	Resurrection Cemetery, Chardon

When Mary and her twin sister, Catherine, (Sr. Cathy Joy, HM) were born, they weighed in at three pounds each! An older sister and a younger brother completed the family of Joseph and Theresa (Susa) Popoczy. They were bonded by their strong faith and love for each other. Mary attended St. Joseph Elementary School in Collinwood and Notre Dame Academy in Cleveland, staffed by the Sisters of Notre Dame. She participated wholeheartedly in as many school activities as possible. Her association with the sisters and a desire for growth in prayer led her to realize a call to religious life. She entered as a postulant on September 8, 1956 and at investment received the name Sister Mary Paul René.

Sister Mary received a bachelor's degree from St. John College in Cleveland and a master's degree in education from Bowling Green State University in Ohio. She ministered as a primary grade teacher at schools in Ohio and Florida for more than 25 years. An excellent and creative teacher, Sister used simple stories to tap into the imagination of the young children. She guided them to recognize the presence of Jesus in quiet times and in the simple things of life around them. Sister Mary was loved and respected by her students and co-workers.

In 1986 Sister transitioned into the ministry of director of religious education. Her continued enthusiasm and desire for pastoral ministry led to further study to obtain certification as a pastoral associate. For the next 18 years Sister Mary served at three different parishes. She organized religious education programs for small children through adults. She visited the sick and instructed people searching for God in their lives as they sought to enter the Church. Sister assisted parish administrators wherever needed.

Sister's life was rooted in God, a God who loved her and whom she loved. She taught and lived the practice of centering prayer and was a member of the Charismatic Renewal Team in the SND community. Being a loving listener at healing retreats and involvement in bereavement ministries allowed her to be touched by God's love and to share it with others. Sister Mary served as regional superior and then became the prayer sister for the leadership team. Her photographs captured her love for God's presence in the beauty of nature that surrounded her.

In 2012 Sister Mary became a resident of the Chardon Health Care Center. She kept her mind active and attempted to participate in every activity. Even as her physical health gradually declined, she remained grounded with a sweetness of heart and a gentleness of spirit that raised the spirits of those around her. Prayer continued to be the essence of her days.

May Sister Mary rest in the arms of our good and loving God.