

Death Notice

SISTER MARY ROSE BERNARD

ND 4556

Dolores Elizabeth GROTH

Immaculate Conception Province, USA

Date and Place of Birth: March 8, 1931 Toledo, Ohio
Date and Place of Profession: August 16, 1951 Toledo, Ohio
Date and Place of Death: November 13, 2025 Sylvania, Ohio



**He will cover you with His wings; you will be safe in His care.
His faithfulness will protect and defend you. Psalm 91:4**

Few people can change a nation, but Sister Mary Rose Bernard could. Sister Mary Rose Bernard was born to Fredrick and Clara Rose (Ostierriider) Groth in a family of two brothers and two sisters. Her youngest sibling was Sister Mary Robert Clare, S.N.D. who died in 2019. In her early years of ministry she was an elementary teacher and principal in the Toledo, Ohio area.

In 1961 the first Sisters of Notre Dame sailed to Papua New Guinea (PNG), and Sister's missionary heart was stirred. She would arrive there just three years later. Sister was teacher and principal of primary schools, taught at the new Notre Dame High School in Kumdi, and was the director of Maria Kwin Vocational Center in Banz where she organized and established a center for girls who were not eligible for high school.

Sister was touched by an article the in May 1985 Time Magazine featuring HIV/AIDS in Africa. She knew something had to be done to prevent the disease in PNG. An excellent teacher, she made charts explaining the virus and conducted workshops to teach others. Sister ministered to the victims and learned how to accompany them. When a person became infected, Sister was often called to give counsel to the family. She showed families how to love and support rather than reject.

She learned to take blood for testing, give post-test counseling, and home care. Sister established the Shalom Care Center where individuals could live with her to let them know they were cared for and loved. She designed programs for orphans, caregivers, street-kids, drug addicts and those with special needs. Together they learned cooking, gardening, silk screening, and more. She began other programs to assist the victims such as "Community Conversations" and "Celebrate Life". In 2010 Sister Mary Rose Bernard was awarded the prestigious Logohu Medal given by the PNG Government for her work in HIV/AIDS ministry. Her heartfelt love of the PNG people far outweighed any medal.

In 2011, Sister returned to the USA after 47 years in PNG and resided in Norwalk, Ohio. As a pastoral volunteer, she visited the homebound, told stories, and prayed fervently for each person. Her sincere promise of prayer was never forgotten as names and photos were recorded in her phone or on notecards.

On November 13, 2025, Sister died while a resident at Rosary Care Center in Sylvania, Ohio, still a missionary at heart as shown by her attention given to the residents. She was 94 years old and in her 75th year of religious profession.

May she rest in the arms of her protective and compassionate God.