

Sister Doris Rehtiene, C.PP.S.

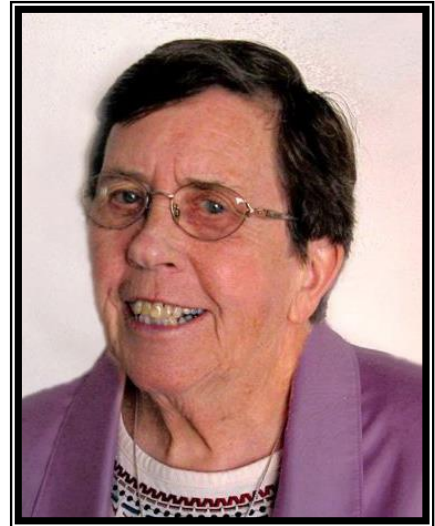
Born: August 9, 1931

Professed: August 10, 1951

Entered into Life: December 19, 2019

Verse on her memorial card:

**“This is too glorious, too wonderful to believe...
You saw me before I was born... How precious this is
Lord.” Psalm 139**



December 23, 2019

Dear Sisters,

Shortly after 2 p.m. on Thursday, December 19, 2019, our Sister Doris Rehtiene hurried into the arms of God. Linda Cento and Sister Theresa Jezl were at her side. As Theresa sang the one Spanish song within her repertoire, Sister Doris opened her eyes briefly and then breathed her last.

Sister Doris received a diagnosis of cancer only a month ago. She spoke frequently during these past weeks about the difference between talking with others about going home to God and preparing for one's own final journey. Despite some apprehension, she came to peace. On the day before her death Sister Doris told the hospice nurse, "I am about to have the best Christmas ever."

Born on August 9, 1931, to James and Vera (Pieper) Rehtiene, Doris was the second of their three children. She was baptized at St. Liborius Parish in St. Louis and entered our community from Assumption Parish in Mattese. Doris (Sr. Mary Kevin) became a novice on July 25, 1949, and professed first vows on August 10, 1951. She completed a bachelor's degree in theology at Quincy College in 1967.

Sister Doris gave herself whole-heartedly in each of her many ministries. She served as an elementary teacher and principal, as a pastoral minister and director of religious education, as a spiritual director, as a food pantry volunteer and as a caregiver to elders. She also engaged in internal community service as a formation director, as coordinator of the Motherhouse and of our Partners in Mission, as a member of the housekeeping and transportation staff, and as hospitality coordinator.

In Missouri, Sister Doris taught at St. George and St. Monica in St. Louis, at St. Brendan in Mexico, at Most Sacred Heart in Florissant, at St. Paul in St. Paul, and at Linda Vista Catholic School in Chesterfield. She also served as a volunteer at St. Agatha Center and at St. Cecilia Food Pantry.

Sister Doris was one of three pioneer sisters who opened our first South American mission in Lima, Peru. Stories abound of the initial journey to Peru: of departing the U.S. with only five

dollars, of being forced to leave the ship in Panama because they did not have the proper visas; of re-boarding mid-sea by climbing the ladder on the side of the ship.

Sister Doris spent nearly forty-five years in Peru and Bolivia, more than half of her professed life. Her time there was interspersed with one to five-year stints in the U.S., but always she felt the pull to return to South America. She had a passionate desire to respond to the needs she encountered and often encouraged other Sisters to consider coming south. Upon returning to LaPaz in 1990 she discovered that many of the parishioners she knew in the 1960's were now retired and, in her words, "feeling useless and lonely." So, Sister Doris began the Edad de Oro (Golden Age Club). In a providential coincidence, Sister Guichy was with the current Edad de Oro when she received news of Sister Doris' death.

Sister Doris' many journeys to and from South America were perhaps metaphor for her interior journey. She aimed to be "at home" in each of her many ministries and to be at home with herself. In the changes after Vatican II she searched for the meaning of vocation and religious life. As coordinator of the motherhouse during a time of major restructuring to small communities within the large community of 100-plus sisters, she questioned if she was the right person to lead this transition. Her honesty and deep commitment to prayer enabled her to navigate the sometimes-troubled waters that were part of her journey. Her fidelity through these struggles strengthened her ability to be understanding and supportive of others.

Sister Doris was preceded in death by her parents and by her brother James and his wife Dolores. She is survived by her sister and brother-in-law, Jo-Ann and Martin Jungewaelter; by her step-brother, Mark Rehtiene; by nieces, nephews, cousins and many friends. They, along with her profession classmates and all our Sisters and Partners in Mission, will miss her earthly presence. Let us hold one another close in prayer during this time of loss and grief.

Sister Doris' body will be returned to St. Joseph Chapel on Friday, December 27, 2019, at 3:30 p.m. and her wake will be from 4-7 p.m. with a Prayer Service of Thanksgiving at 6 p.m. Her wake will continue Saturday, December 28, from 9 - 10:45 a.m. with her Funeral Mass at 11 a.m., all in St. Joseph Chapel.

Sister Doris chose verses from Psalm 139 for her memorial card: "You saw me before I was born . . . How precious all this is, Lord." Indeed, the life of Sister Doris is precious in God's eyes and in our eyes. May this new life that she now experiences be "too glorious, too wonderful to believe!"

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Sr. Janice Bader".

Sr. Janice Bader