

SISTER MARÍA EVA FLORES, CDP
1940 - 2018

Sister María Eva Flores, CDP (formerly known as Sister María Carolina or simply “MC”), entered eternal life on August 13, 2018 at the age of 78. Sister María Eva was born July 18, 1940 in Fort Stockton, Texas to Ramón Salas Flores and Josefina González. She professed first vows as a Sister of Divine Providence on August 2, 1965.

In the succeeding 53 years, she made numerous significant contributions to her Congregation and its mission. Her service to God’s people was multi-faceted. She was an educator, advisor, mentor, colleague, writer, lecturer, organizer, historian, theatrical director, and passionate, courageous, strong advocate and activist for the cultural evolution of Latinas in Church, society and the world. She was a most authentic critic and strongest supporter of Mexican-American/Latino/Hispanic and all first generation students. Her legacy lives in the many individuals who learned from her that they are called to carry on the vital work that remains to be done.

In her 41 years of service to Our Lady of the Lake University (OLLU) in San Antonio, Texas, Sister María Eva served as a Professor of History, Drama, Public Speaking, Voice and Diction, and Mexican American Studies. She served as Faculty Advisor to different recognized student organizations such as the Association of Black Students (ABS), Danza Universal, United Hispanics Association; she supported young students interested in politics as well as early efforts to organize a student historical society on campus.

Sister María Eva exemplified dedicated service. In the classroom, she consistently informed her students that they were capable of thinking critically, learning how to manipulate, cultivate, and dominate the written word. She was one of the most demanding professors and expected work of the highest quality. She was constantly teaching, mentoring, and challenging students and people around her to keep working, reading, focusing, organizing, writing, and disciplining themselves in order to achieve their goals and help their communities. Her work as a teacher and mentor did not end at the classroom’s nearest exit. Her activism and commitment to the people go back to the 1960’s.

During those years, she was very involved in the community, including Teatro del Barrio in an effort to bring theater to the people. In collaboration with Reverend Monsignor Balthasar “Balty” Janacek (1926-2007), Sister María Eva was involved in getting water to Meadowood Acres, an area in the outskirts of San Antonio south adjacent to 90 West where families who had been displaced by the Hemisfair Urban Renewal had relocated.

She was also very instrumental in the work of Hispanas Unidas who were housed at OLLU between 1984 and 1996, offering conferences and other events for women. The words by one of the women highlight the essence of the work by Hispanas Unidas: “You educate a man, you educate a person. You educate a woman, you educate a family.”

Sister María Eva was the co-founder of the Center for Women in Church and Society at OLLU which opened in 1982, and a National Coordinator of Las Hermanas, a national group of Latina nuns.

She was a published scholar whose interests included history, literature, and women's representation and place in history and contemporary society. She actively participated at different historical professional conferences, presenting and contributing her own research and works to the field of history. As a librarian of special collections at OLLU, she devoted time and energy to enhancing, maintaining and promoting the collection of important documents from the community in order to save the collective memory and history of the Mexican American people of South Texas for future generations.

At OLLU, Sister María Eva was the only faculty member who worked with the Spanish Colonial records since they were transferred to the University from San José Mission State Park as the Old Spanish Missions Historical Research Library in 1978. She was instrumental in building the collections, adding several important records from groups including:

1. Hispanas Unidas
2. Las Hermanas
3. The Berriozábal Papers, the collection that documents Maria Antonietta Berriozabal's work she carried out as the first Mexican-American woman to serve on the San Antonio City Council
4. La Sociedad de la Unión records
5. PADRES
6. The Segundo de Febrero records
7. Missionary Catechists of Divine Providence (MCDP)

Her outstanding career as a professor, teacher, special collections librarian, and scholar earned her distinguish recognition from the University community as the OLLU Moody Professor in 2002 and 1992. She is one of only two professors at OLLU who have earned this distinction twice (*Sister María Eva and her good friend and collaborator, the late Antonio Rigual, Ph.D., founder of HACU-Hispanic Association of Colleges and Universities*). The Moody Professorship is a collaborative Faculty Award given at OLLU and UIW (University of the Incarnate Word); it is presented annually to a faculty member from each of the universities for outstanding scholarly activities and professional service to the university.

In addition to her 41 years at OLLU, Sister María Eva taught English in Louisiana and at Providence High School, San Antonio, Texas.

Sister María Eva Flores earned a Masters in Library Science with a specialty in Archives from the University of Texas at Austin, a Masters of Arts in Bilingual and Bicultural Studies from the University of Texas at San Antonio, and a Ph.D. in History from Arizona

State University. Her areas of study in the Ph.D. program were Colonial Latin America, Public History, and US–Mexican American Women.

Sister's dedication to her family was clearly evident. While being active at her work, she shared a home with Don Ramón and Doña Josefina in their later years and cared for them until they passed on. She was recognized by Morningside Ministries with their 2011 Elizabeth McGown Caregiver Legacy Award.

She is survived by siblings Juan Ramón Flores, Maria Concepcion Murguia, Carolina G. Flores, and her Sisters of Divine Providence. She is also survived by her nieces and nephews: Monica Aura and Victor Carlos Maldonado, María Elena Murguia, Ramón Luis and Rebecca Adriana Flores and their respective families. She was preceded in death by her parents Ramón Salas Flores and Josefina (González) Flores.

On Wednesday, August 15, the rosary is at 4:00 p.m. and the Wake at 6:30 p.m. in Annunciation Chapel at Our Lady of the Lake Convent. A Mass of Resurrection will be on Thursday, August 16, at 10:30 a.m. in Sacred Heart Conventual Chapel at Our Lady of the Lake University.

In lieu of flowers, you may wish to make a memorial contribution to the Sisters of Divine Providence, 515 S.W. 24th Street, San Antonio, TX 78207-4619.