

Sister Denise Billeaud, CDP
1928-2020



Sister Denise Theresa Billeaud, (formerly Sister Rita Louise, CDP,) entered eternal life on October 30, 2020 at the age of 92. She was born on June 23, 1928, in Broussard, LA, the oldest of Louis M. and Lucile A. Corne Billeaud's nine daughters. She answered God's call to become a Sister of Divine Providence (CDP) on June 21, 1947 and professed first vows on June 22, 1948. She was a theologian, educator, formation director, and spiritual friend to Bishops and laity alike.

Sister Denise earned a Bachelor's in Music Education from Our Lady of the Lake College, San Antonio, Texas. She also earned a Master of Arts in Theology from Notre Dame, Indiana where she developed her love for Scripture. Her love for God's Word in Scripture expanded her heart and her head. Scripture became part of the air she breathed and provided the graces which sustained and impelled her life. She recalled that it was through teaching that the gifts of loving and understanding came to fruition. It was also how she passed on the inspiration and love that she had received from her loving, communicating God.

Sister Denise's first eleven years of ministry were as a music teacher. She started at Providence Academy in Alexandria, Louisiana, followed by ten years at St. Anthony School in San Antonio, Texas. She continued teaching music as she served her Congregation as the Aspirancy Director and later as the Formation Director of Postulants. In 1967, she became a Professor of Scripture at Our Lady of the Lake College. Three years later she began her 18-year ministry as a high school religion teacher and department chair: Providence High School, San Antonio, Texas (1970-1979) and Xavier Prep High School in New Orleans, Louisiana (1979-1988.) She enjoyed her subsequent time in Lafayette where she worked in the Diocese of Lafayette as the Secretary to Bishops Harry Flynn and Edward O'Donnell. This was also a cherished time of reconnecting with her family.

Sister Denise lived her life as a witness to God's goodness, HESED (Hebrew for mercy). She prayed that her life would be a praise for God's fatherly/motherly love, his/her wonderful guiding Spirit and for her dear Spouse Jesus. Those who knew her would attest that her prayer was answered!

Sister Denise is survived by the Sisters of Divine Providence and by seven of her eight sisters, Sister Alberta Billeaud, OCD, Mother Mary John Billeaud, OCD, Sister Antoinette Billeaud, CDP, Mrs. Polly Billeaud Garber, Mrs. Frances Billeaud Bendana, Sister Theresa Anne Billeaud, CDP, Mrs. Mary Anne Billeaud Chiarulli and brother-in law Eugene Emil Chiarulli Jr. She is preceded in death by her parents Louis and Lucile Billeaud, her sister, Helen Billeaud Baker, and brothers-in-law Everett E. Baker, Frank James Garber Sr., and Orlando Guadalupe Bendana.

All services will be private but livestreamed via Sisters of Divine Providence Facebook page. The Rosary will be held on Thursday, November 5, at 4:00 p.m. with the Wake at 6:30 p.m. A Mass of Resurrection and burial will take place on Friday, November 6, 2020 at 11:00 a.m.

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, Texas 78207-4619.