



*Sisters of Charity*  
of Cincinnati

Contact: Sister Georgia Kitt, Communications Office  
513-347-5466 or Georgia.kitt@srcharitycinti.org

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**Nov. 9, 2019**

**Sister of Charity of Cincinnati John Miriam Jones dies at age 95**

**DELHI TOWNSHIP, OHIO – Nov. 9, 2019–** Sister of Charity of Cincinnati John Miriam Jones died Nov. 3, 2019, at the age of 95 in Mother Margaret Hall, the nursing facility of the Sisters of Charity. Sister John Miriam was born Mary Martha Jones on Feb. 22, 1924 to John C. and Mary (White) Jones in Chattanooga, Tennessee. She was an only child. She was a Sister of Charity for 76 years.

Sister John Miriam grew up in Denver, Colorado, having moved there when her father was in search of work during the depression. She attended Cathedral grade school and graduated from Cathedral High School in 1942 where she was taught by the Sisters of Charity. After high school she enrolled at Loretta Heights College in Denver. It was while on a retreat at the Heights that she had a clear sense of God's personal invitation to religious life. She called it, 'a touching moment of grace.' Sister John Miriam entered the Sisters of Charity the following September in 1943.

Sister John Miriam earned a Bachelor of Arts degree in biology from the College of Mount St. Joseph in 1954 and a Master of Science degree in biology from the University of Notre Dame, South Bend, Indiana, in 1961. She earned a Ph.D. in microbiology in 1970 from the University of Notre Dame.

Sister John Miriam's ministries span more than 50 years in education as teacher, principal and administrator. In her early years she taught in Chicago, Illinois, Cincinnati, Ohio, and Albuquerque, New Mexico, as well as Pueblo, Denver and Trinidad in Colorado. She was first assigned to teach at St. Sebastian, Chicago, in 1945. She served as principal at Pueblo Catholic, Pueblo, Colorado, from 1962-'66 before moving to full-time study at the University of Notre Dame. She was a faculty member at Colorado College, Colorado Springs, Colorado, from 1971-'72. It was in 1972 that she was asked to return to the University of Notre Dame as assistant provost to help open doors for women and to help them succeed there. She taught microbiology, was coordinator for disabled students and directed the foreign studies program in addition to becoming associate provost (1987). Sister John Miriam coordinated faculty appointments and supervised affirmative action activities on campus as well. In 1989 she was elected the Central Region's Provincial for the Sisters of Charity and came to Cincinnati; after eight years in this role, and following a brief sabbatical, she agreed to become the dean of

academics at the College of Mount St. Joseph (1997-'01). This was her last formal ministry effort, one that afforded her gifted coworkers at the Mount.

Throughout her varied experiences of ministry Sister John Miriam often commented on how truly happy her life has been. "I have come to a sincere love of those with whom I share the title Sister; the various ministries have left me with good friends with whom I served or with whom I ministered." It was the years at Notre Dame and post-Vatican II, happening concurrently, that highlighted the 1970s and 80s. It was in her intense probing of faith and her examination of religious life that she witnessed both personal grace and growth. These men and women mirrored God's best gifts for her. Later Sister John Miriam authored a book, *With an Eagle's Eye*, after taking time to get in touch with her Irish heritage; her book offers a seven-day sojourn in Celtic spirituality. It was this profound experience while on sabbatical in 1997 in Ireland that she put her reflections to paper. She said, "I knew within the first 10 minutes that it (Ireland) really resonated with me - I could identify with the people."

Sister John Miriam was honored by the University of Notre Dame with the 1987 James E. Armstrong Award, which is given to an alumnus/alumna who is a current employee and has rendered distinguished service to the university. In 1995 she received an honorary Doctor of Humane Letters degree from the College of Mount St. Joseph. In 1999 she was one of the inaugural initiates into Notre Dame's Wall of Honor. The plaque, commemorating her service, reads: "In 1972 the University underwent historic change, becoming a coeducational institution of higher learning. Sister Jones directed that transition with an impressive blend of imagination, grace and humor." This held true for all endeavors she undertook. In her retirement years she remained active, teaching part-time at the College of Mount St. Joseph and the Athenaeum of Ohio along with giving talks and retreats.

A close friend and colleague, Jane Pitz, recalls, "Sister John and I began working together as women arrived on campus in 1972. She 'headed' up this adventure of bringing Notre Dame to be an equal institution, educating women along with men. Her presence in walking through the maze of 'firsts' was invaluable to me and the other women staff in Badin and Walsh halls. Her calmness was appreciated as we ran the gamut of adjustments to campus expectations of women being there. And I know that Notre Dame was and has been an important piece of her life and life in ministry. Thank you, Sisters of Charity, for lending her to us at ND."

Sister of Charity friend Mary Ann Humbert remembers, "John Miriam and I enjoyed a unique complementary energy when we danced together for prayer services and special occasions. Every time I saw her recently I would mention that, 'I still miss dancing with you!' She also authored a booklet for us on charism that I have often used with Sisters and Associates. I'm sure she has found another dance partner now and is Grace-fully enjoying the pleasure of freedom of movement she graced all of us with for years. Enjoy the dance, John."

Sister John Miriam Jones is survived by several cousins and many friends.

Sisters will greet visitors in the back of the Motherhouse chapel from 2–3 p.m. on Tuesday, Nov. 12, 2019, followed by the Mass of Christian Burial at 3 p.m. Burial will be in the Sisters of Charity cemetery.

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Memorials can be made in Sister John Miriam's name to the Sisters of Charity of Cincinnati Retirement Fund, 5900 Delhi Rd., Mount St. Joseph, Ohio 45051.

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The Sisters of Charity of Cincinnati, whose Motherhouse is located in Delhi Township, a western suburb of Cincinnati, is an apostolic Catholic women's religious community that exists to carry out the Gospel of Jesus Christ through service and prayer in the world. Sisters, using their professional talents as ministers of education, health care, pastoral and social services, as well as caring for all creation, currently live and minister in 17 U.S. states, in Guatemala and Mexico. They also sponsor institutions to address education, health care and social service needs, with particular concern for direct service to the poor.

The Sisters of Charity of Cincinnati are joined in mission by 208 Associates.  
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