



PRECIOUS  
& BLESSED

*is the death of the  
faithful  
before*  
GOD.



School Sisters of Notre Dame  
of St. Louis

320 East Ripa Avenue  
Saint Louis, MO 63125

[www.ssnd-sl.org](http://www.ssnd-sl.org)



*Sister Marie Dierker, SSND*

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*Born*

*November 5, 1921*

*Professed*

*July 28, 1944*

*Ministry*

*elementary educator/administrator;*

*musician; clerical service ~*

*California, Illinois, Louisiana, Missouri*

*Died*

*August 8, 2008*

# *Sister Marie (Mary Bernarde) Dierker, SSND*



The youngest of five children for Clara [Fresen-burg] and Bernard Dierker was born in St. Louis, MO, on November 5, 1921. She was baptized on November 8, 1921, at St. John the Baptist Church and given the name Marie. Mr. Dierker had died the previous July, so her mother was left to raise two boys and three girls.



Marie attended Our Lady of Sorrows Grade School and Notre Dame High School where she was taught by the School Sisters of Notre Dame. At the beginning of her sophomore year, her mother died. Her married sister, Cecilia, moved to their family home and took the place of her mother. Her oldest brother, Bernard, became her guardian and treated her like a daughter. After graduation from high school, Marie remained home for two years. During this time, she taught music classes at Our Lady of Sorrows and gave piano lessons to some of the children. This experience strengthened her long-held desire to become a School Sister of Notre Dame. At first, her brother opposed her decision but finally consented.

Marie entered the candidature at Ripa on September 7, 1941. After two years of college, she was received into the novitiate on July 27, 1943, and given the name Mary Bernarde, after her father and brother. She pronounced her first vows on July 28, 1944, and final vows on July 28, 1950.

Following her first profession, Sister Marie ministered in education as music teacher, administrator and parish organist for 44 years.



She was missioned to St. Mary Assumption, Our Lady of Good Counsel and St. Therese, Little Flower in New Orleans, LA; St. Francis de Sales and St. Gabriel in St. Louis; St. Joseph, Kimmswick, MO; St. Clare, St. Clair, MO; St. Rita, San Diego, CA; St. Hilary, Pico Rivera, CA; St. Aloysius, Tulare, CA; Our Lady of Perpetual Help, Indio, CA; St. Luke, Belleville, IL; and St. Francis of Assisi, Teutopolis, IL. She was principal at St. Rita, San Diego, and Our Lady of Perpetual Help, Indio, CA; St. Joseph, Kimmswick, and St. Clare, St. Clair. From 1988 to 2002, she was a member of the secretarial staff at Notre Dame Tutorial Center at the motherhouse.

In March 2002, Sister Marie was missioned to Veronica House. As her health declined, she was transferred to Anna House in November 2004. She died peacefully of a heart attack on August 8, 2008, at 8:20 p.m. with sisters praying at her bedside.

A wake/vigil was held at Anna House and the motherhouse on August 12. The Mass of Christian Burial was celebrated the following morning with burial in the motherhouse cemetery. She is survived by a sister, Clara Moulton of Webster Groves, MO. Her nephew, Albert Ackfeld, gave a short eulogy and played "Over the Rainbow" as relatives, sisters, co-workers, former students and friends celebrated her life.

Sister Marie was a quiet, prayerful and conscientious person. Her contagious smile was indicative of her wit and fun-loving personality. She loved her ministry of music and taught children to appreciate its value in their lives. She mentored younger members on her faculty and supported and encouraged those in leadership positions. Her years in California gave her a great love for all of creation, especially the mountains and water. May she now rejoice in the fullness of life which God promised to those who accept the invitation to follow Jesus!

*Precious and blessed is the death of the faithful before God.*