

## **Sister Marise Meis, CSA**

Sister Marise Meis, CSA, baptized Mary Agnes, died peacefully July 3, 2025, at St. Francis Home, Fond du Lac, Wisconsin.

Mary Agnes was born September 23, 1939, in Russell, Kansas, to Servillian (Bill) and Irene Weigel Meis. She was the second oldest of a family of eight children, two boys and six girls. Inspired by the Sisters of St. Agnes during her grade school and early high school years, she entered St. Agnes Convent in 1955 at the age of fifteen with her older sister, Shirley, now remembered as Sister Mary Rose Meis, CSA. Mary completed her high school education at St. Agnes High School and continued in formation for religious life. She made her first profession of vows in the Congregation of Sisters of St. Agnes as Sister Marise on August 15, 1959, in Fond du Lac, Wisconsin.



Sister Marise began her life of ministry as an elementary teacher at St. Patrick's School in Fond du Lac, and at Holy Family School, Bronx, New York, while earning her BS in Education from Marian College, Fond du Lac. During her years in the Bronx, Sister enrolled in Spanish classes sponsored by the Archdiocese of New York to better serve the growing Spanish speaking population of the city. Her increasing proficiency in Spanish, and the influence of her instructors, led her to volunteer when CSA leadership invited sisters to consider being part of the congregation's expanded missionary efforts in Latin America. In 1965, CSA leadership accepted Sister Marise's volunteer request. She then began her journey as a devoted missionary who, for fifty-seven years (1965-2022,) spent her life "teaching, catechizing, and trying to sow the seed of faith" among the people she served in Ecuador, Nicaragua, and Honduras. She came back to the USA for brief periods during these years, yet she always returned immersing herself among the people she had come to love.

Supported by courses in intercultural studies and Spanish at the Catholic University of Puerto Rico, Sister Marise spent her first month as a missionary in Managua, Nicaragua. She was then assigned to teach 1<sup>st</sup> grade at the Cardinal Spellman Bilingual School for Boys, Quito, Ecuador (1966-1967). She returned to Nicaragua where she served most of her missionary years in parish communities and local universities along the Atlantic Coast, specifically in Rosita and Puerto Cabezas. She taught classes in English as a second language to elementary, high school, and university level students. She served as a catechist and pastoral presence in parishes and mission villages. She helped form a generation of catechists who continue to serve as Ministers of the Word especially in rural areas where priestly presence is minimal. From 1998-2001, Sister was an instructor in a special language program in La Ceiba, Honduras.

Sister Marise also served in leadership roles among her CSA sisters in Latin America including eight years as their regional coordinator and in the formation program for young women preparing for religious life. She was the contact person for Holy Family Parish, Fond du Lac, while they were a sister parish with Santa Rosa de Lima Parish in Rosita, Nicaragua. She is beloved among the people for her joyful presence, her untiring dedication to ministry, and her respect for their culture and customs which formed a lasting bond between them that remains to this day.

In June of 2022, Sister Marise returned to Fond du Lac to receive care for her declining health at Nazareth Court & Center. She was subsequently admitted to St. Francis Home where she received loving care until the time of her death. The people of Nicaragua mourn her loss, together with her family and her CSA sisters.

Preceding Sister Marise in death were her parents and her sisters, Yvonne Rodriguez, Geraldine Henning, and Sister Mary Rose Meis, CSA.

Sister is survived by her sisters Katherine (Jeff) Plank, Christine Hadley; her brothers Father Peter Meis, OFM Cap, Michael Meis; her brother-in-law, Richard Henning; her nieces, nephews and their families, and the Sisters of St. Agnes with whom she lived, prayed, and ministered.

Cremation has taken place.

All services for Sister Marise will be held on Monday, July 14, 2025.

Visitation will be held from 9:00 a.m.–11:00 a.m. and 12:00 p.m.–1:30 p.m. at Nazareth Court and Center, 375 Gillett Street, Fond du Lac, Wisconsin.

A Prayer Service will be held at 11:00 a.m. in Nazareth Center Chapel, 375 Gillett Street, Fond du Lac, Wisconsin.

The Liturgy of Christian Burial will be offered at 2:00 p.m. in St. Francis Home Chapel, 33 Everett Street, Fond du Lac, Wisconsin, with Bishop Paul Schmitz, OFM Cap., presiding.

Burial of cremains will follow in St. Joseph Springs Cemetery, Fond du Lac, Wisconsin.

Memorials may be directed to the CSA Mission Advancement Office, 320 County Road K, Fond du Lac, WI 54937.

The Sisters of St. Agnes and the Meis family are grateful to the nurses and staff of Nazareth Court and Center, St. Francis Home, and Hospice Hope for their devoted care of Sister Marise.

Zacherl Funeral Home is serving the Congregation of Sisters of St. Agnes.