

Mary Jane Erramouspe aka Sister Miriam Grace

1928-2026



Miriam Grace Obituary

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Sister Miriam Grace, CSC

(Mary Jane Erramouspe)

February 23, 1928 - March 11, 2026

Entered the Sisters of the Holy Cross from Rock Springs, Wyoming, on September 7, 1951

Initial Profession of Vows on August 15, 1954

Mary Jane Erramouspe, also known as Mary Jean to family and friends, was born on February 23, 1928, in Rock Springs, Wyoming. The third of 10 children, she grew up with four brothers and five sisters on the family's sheep ranch. Her parents, Gaston and Grace (Larre) Erramouspe, were Basque immigrants born in south-western France. Her father first came to the United States in the early 1900's and enlisted in the U.S. Army during World War I. He returned to France to marry her mother in 1923, and together they came back to the U.S. to settle in Wyoming. Mary Jean once said of her and her siblings' upbringing, "The unforgettable influence and example of responsibility, honesty, and love of family, we learned from our parents when we were growing up. Our faith in God, which was instilled in us by Papa and Mama, has stood us well in governing our lives and instructing our own families."

Mary Jean's primary school education took place in a log cabin schoolhouse that employed one teacher. She attended a local public school from the seventh grade until her junior year, when she transferred to the boarding school at St. Mary of the Wasatch, Salt Lake City, Utah staffed by the Sisters of the Holy Cross. After graduating high school in 1946, she continued her higher education at St. Mary of the Wasatch and earned her bachelor's degree in education from the college in 1951. She entered the Sisters of the Holy Cross, Notre Dame, Indiana, on September 7, 1951. In her application to the novitiate, she wrote, "I feel that I'll find happiness in this kind of life and save my soul and the souls of others." Upon reception of the holy habit one year later, she became Sister Miriam Grace. She was proud to bear her mother's name and a variation of her own.

Sister Miriam Grace was a respected teacher and principal for over 30 years following her initial profession of vows in 1954. She primarily taught third through eighth grades in Holy Cross sponsored elementary and secondary schools throughout California, Arizona, Idaho, and Utah. In 1965, while principal of St. Joseph School, Pocatello, Idaho, she earned her master's degree in education from Immaculate Heart College, Los Angeles, California. Until the mid-1980's, Sister Miriam Grace continued to serve as administrator at Holy Rosary School, Idaho Falls, Idaho; St. Anne's School, Las Vegas, Nevada; and St. Pius School, Redwood City, California. Parents always had high praise for Sister Miriam Grace's

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teaching ability and conscientious nature towards her students. Her other education assignments include a one-year appointment as religious education coordinator in the Diocese of Sekondi, Takoradi, Ghana. She also assisted the Writing, the Road to Literacy office in coordinating the IBM Writing to Read Program for schools in the Archdiocese of Los Angeles, California, from 1990 to 1992.

In 1987, Sister Miriam Grace began a ministry involving healthcare and retired seniors. She assisted in the business office of Holy Cross Medical Center, Mission Hills, California, until 1990, and then managed a program for financial assistance to elderly patients at Holy Cross Hospital, Salt Lake City, Utah, from 1992 to 1994. After volunteering for a year as a tutor in Our Lady of Lourdes School, Salt Lake City, she served as an activities assistant at The Victorian Retirement Center, Ventura, California, until 1996. She completed an internship with Mercy Housing, Denver, Colorado, in 1997. She was a property manager at one of the company's facilities for persons without housing, The Plaza on Platte, from 1997 to 2006, and another in Colorado Springs until 2008.

In spring 2008, Sister Miriam Grace transferred to Saint Catherine by the Sea Convent in Ventura, California where she was an active community member. The sisters' retirement home offered many opportunities for service in the local area. Sister Miriam Grace initially volunteered at The Lighthouse for Women and Children, a shelter that provided, housing, emergency and recovery services. She assisted with data entry and other office work, as well as served as a mentor and faith partner to women in the shelter's Life Recovery Program, a 12-month inpatient program that provided counseling, addiction recovery, life skills, and vocational training. Of this experience, she said, "I like the opportunity to help make a difference in these women's lives, and to see them become Christ's disciples, return to the world to become good citizens, be able to take care of themselves, establish a home, and begin working to support themselves and their families once again."

Sister gradually spent more time making a home for her local community at Saint Catherine's by attending to activities that keep a large convent running smoothly. A series of medical crises led to her transfer to Saint Mary's Convent in summer 2025, where she died as the noon hour approached on March 11, 2026, following a harsh winter in Indiana.

Sister Miriam Grace's never forgot the Hail Mary prayer in her parents' native Basque language, "Maria Saindua, Jainkoaren Ama, egizu othoitz gu bekatorosentzat orai eta gure heriotzeko oreanean. Amen." While the sisters at the motherhouse kept vigil with Sister Miriam Grace in her last days, the Erramouspe women soothed her over the telephone with the old Basque songs that seemed to calm Sister in her final hours. This woman, full of grace, died at the age of 98, having made her home with the Sisters of the Holy Cross over 74 years ago. May she now take her place among the household of the saints.

Services will be held at the Church of Our Lady of Loretto on Thursday, March 26, 2026, with visitation at 9:30 a.m. Prayers and memento at 10:30 a.m., followed by the Mass of the Resurrection. See the Sisters of the Holy Cross website for details. Kaniewski Funeral Home is assisting.

-Madisen Toth, Archivist

Sisters of the Holy Cross Archives and Records