News



Sr. Teresita Weind died April 28 at age 81. (Courtesy of the Sisters of Notre Dame de Namur)



by Dan Stockman

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Sr. Teresita Weind, the beloved former superior general of the Sisters of Notre Dame de Namur who advocated for Black sisters and fought racism even as she suffered from cancer, has died. She was 81.



Sr. Teresita Weind died April 28 at age 81. (Courtesy of the Sisters of Notre Dame de Namur)

Weind served two terms in leadership of her congregation, with her second term extended by two years due to the COVID-19 pandemic, which prevented a chapter from Namur were the first congregation of women religious to receive permission from the Vatican to hold a virtual general chapter, bringing together delegates from five continents online.

"Now is the moment, day, era to be the place where God dwells in mystery, in order to make goodness known in the world," Weind said in her closing remarks of that chapter being held. Throughout her leadership terms, she worked frequently with the International Union of Superiors General in Rome.

"We are grateful forever for Sr. Teresita's generous sharing with us of her abundant gifts as Congregational Leader for fourteen years," said Superior General Sr. Mary Johnson in a statement announcing Weind's April 28 death. "The depth of her spirituality and the breadth of her vision continue to inspire us in all that we can be as Sisters of Notre Dame de Namur, serving on five continents. Her extraordinary life and ministries constitute an enduring legacy of love."

Weind, born Helen Louis Weind on July 6, 1942, in Columbus, Ohio, was baptized into the Baptist Church, but joined the Catholic Church in 1954. She entered the Sisters of Mary of the Presentation in 1960, and transferred to the Sisters of Notre Dame de Namur in 1976.

She held a Bachelor of Science in nursing from Mary College in Bismark, North Dakota, and a Master of Arts in Religious Studies from Mundelein College in Chicago, and ministered in nursing, parish service, pastoral care, spiritual direction and companioning both sisters and lay people. She served in leadership for nine years before being elected superior in 2014.

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Weind was a founding member of the National Black Sisters' Conference, served on the group's board and many committees, and represented the conference on the board of the National Office of Black Catholics. She belonged to the Sisters of Notre Dame de Namur's group Women of Color, where she promoted anti-racism and cross-cultural efforts within the congregation, earning love and respect internationally.

In its announcement, the congregation said Weind continued to meet with the National Black Sisters' Conference and Women of Color via Zoom even through months of pain and suffering from her illness.

Her second term as superior was due to end in 2020, but the pandemic made it impossible to hold a chapter and elect new leadership.

After her terms as superior, Weind continued a ministry in pastoral care, liturgical and community support, and spiritual direction, and served as co-moderator for more than a year in Mount Notre Dame Health Center until failing health and chemotherapy treatments made it impossible.

Congregation officials said Weind's leadership was grounded in loving kindness, and had the gift and spiritual depth "to inspire, uplift and animate others with the wisdom and guidance of the Holy Spirit," and that her homilies, letters, writings and remarks at celebrations and special events exemplified a rare gift from God.

"In her being and presence, she communicated profoundly her life's convictions as a disciple of Jesus, a daughter of the Church and Shepherd Leader for the Sisters of Notre Dame de Namur," the statement said.