

## **Dominican Sister of Peace Maria Teresa Apalategui**



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Maria Teresa (MT) Apalategui**

Dominican Sister of Peace Maria Teresa (Cecilia) Apalategui (79), lovingly known in her Community as M.T., died on February 1, 2020, at the Sansbury Care Center in St. Catharine, KY.

Sister Maria Teresa was one of five children born to Mollie Barnes and Alfonso Apalategui in Tucson, AZ. At the age of 19, Sister Maria Teresa left her home for New Orleans, where she entered the Congregation in 1959. She once said that leaving her family was the hardest thing that she had ever had to do, but it was the most rewarding decision of her life.

Engraved inside her ring was her personal motto - “To do what I am doing.” She loved serving God and God’s

people, and did so faithfully.

Sr. Maria Teresa earned her Bachelor of Arts in Community Service from Mary Rogers College in New York, and her Masters in Social Work from Arizona State University in Tempe, AZ. She put that education, as well as her natural affection, to work serving the poor in Texas, Arizona and Louisiana for the majority of her 58 years of religious life.

She ministered as an advocate for and worked with the poor in Tucson, AZ, for nearly 40 years, first as a facilitator for the elderly in the Diocese, and later, as Associate Director of Tucson Catholic Services, where she served for 10 years.

Sr. Maria Teresa was instrumental in the creation of the Santa Cruz Project, which was dedicated to connecting people with the religious/spiritual, physical/medical, and social services that they needed to improve their lives. She herself spent much of her time in the barrios of the city, home-visiting families to help them find the assistance that they needed.

Always generous with whatever she had, Sr. Maria Teresa also offered technical advice to programs that needed assistance regarding immigration and refugee issues.

After the death of her beloved twin sister Charlotte, Sr. Maria Teresa left Tucson again – this time to live at the St. Catharine Motherhouse in Kentucky. She spent her final ministry of prayer and community service in ministry to her Sisters at the Motherhouse and at the Presbyterian Church’s thrift store, where Hispanic shoppers loved her company.

Sr. Maria Teresa is survived by her brother Carlos Cocio, sister-in-law Shirley Apalategui, and several nieces and nephews. She was preceded in death by her parents, Alfonso and Mollie Barnes Apalategui, older brothers Alphonse and Jack, and twin sister Charlotte Apalategui.

A Vigil of Remembrance Service was held on February 6 at the Sansbury Care Center Chapel.

The funeral liturgy was held at the Sansbury Care Center Chapel on February 7, and Sr. Maria Teresa was buried at the St. Catharine Motherhouse Cemetery.

Memorial gifts in Sr. Maria Teresa's memory may be sent to the Dominican Sisters of Peace, Office of Mission Advancement, 2320 Airport Dr. Columbus, OH 43219 or submitted securely at [oppeace.org](http://oppeace.org).