



Doris Barnes Sullivan

November 19, 2025

Doris May Barnes Sullivan was born in New Orleans on November 20, 1928, and was called home on the morning of November 19, 2025, her 76th wedding anniversary and one day prior to her 97th birthday. She is survived by her three devoted daughters, Joella, Angela, and Melanie Sullivan and a host of family and friends. She was preceded in death by her parents Johnny Barnes Jr. and Adele Nicholas Barnes Collins, her husband, childhood sweetheart and love of her life, Joseph L. Sullivan Sr., and her beloved only son Joseph L. Sullivan Jr.

Doris attended St. Monica's Catholic Elementary School and Xavier Preparatory High School. She often reflected on seeing a saint in action, describing the excitement when Mother Katherine Drexel visited the schools she founded. Doris entered college at the age of sixteen as a student in Xavier University's College of Pharmacy. At that time, the degree requirements changed from a 4-year to 5-year program and the class elected to complete the additional coursework at night and on weekends. She earned her Bachelor of Science degree in Pharmacy in 1949 as one of five women.

Doris served as a Registered Pharmacist for 68 years. In her early career, she worked for several major retail drug stores including Bynum Pharmacy and eventually headed the International Longshoreman's Association Union (ILA Union) Apothecary. After leaving the ILA, she moved into Hospital Pharmacy, becoming the first African American to practice in any hospital in 1970, integrating the city and state. At Methodist Hospital Doris served as a Staff

Pharmacist, Pharmacist-in-Charge, and ultimately as Director of Pharmacy until she retired after 28 years of service. During her tenure at Methodist she continued to blaze new trails to become the first African American Pharmacist to hold a position on the Board of the Southeastern Louisiana Society of Hospital Pharmacists serving as Secretary, and then as its' first African American President in 1974. Throughout her career she mentored many Pharmacists in the city and was instrumental in having Xavier Pharmacy students assigned to train at Methodist and other area hospitals - which had not been allowed before. In retirement, Doris remained involved in Pharmacy. As a member of the Saint Vincent de Paul Society, a Catholic organization that aids the indigent, she spearheaded the creation of the St. Vincent de Paul Pharmacy in New Orleans which provided free medication to those in need for almost 10 years until its closure due to Hurricane Katrina. It was the first pharmacy of its kind in the state, requiring a special license dispensation from the Louisiana Board of Pharmacy.

Service was a constant in Doris' life which she learned from her mother who always helped those in need. She was an active member of the Xavier Preparatory High School Alumni organization and Xavier University #1 Alumni Club often serving as the Class of 1949 Class Agent. She was a Silver Star member of Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority, Incorporated, Alpha Beta Omega Chapter where she served as Secretary and Membership Chair. Doris was a member of the Ladies Altar Society, The Society of St. Vincent De Paul, serving as president at St. Gabriel's parish, Bread for the World, and All Congregations Together (ACT). She received The Order of St. Louis Award which honors those members of the laity who have contributed their time and talents to the church.

Although she led a stellar career, Doris was first and foremost deeply committed to her family. She loved nothing more than spending time with her husband and children. You rarely saw Joe or Doris without each other. She loved to cook, sew, draw, paint, play piano, sing, and dance. It was common

to host family dinners and parties at her home paying attention to every detail from the presentation of the serving tray to ensuring the table was set with beautiful linens. With several excellent cooks in her family she learned many handed-down family recipes but also taught herself to prepare gourmet meals and desserts in French, Italian and Asian cuisines. She sewed beautiful hand-embroidered clothing for her children often surprising the girls with a new dress or outfit. As an endeavor of love, she designed and sewed a hand beaded wedding gown for her daughter.

She remained constant in nurturing her family, friends, and those in need.

Cemetery Details

Mt. Olivet Cemetery

4000 Norman Mayer Ave.
New Orleans, LA 70122

Previous Events

Visitation

DEC 5. 9:00 AM - 11:00 AM (CT)

St. Martin de Porres Catholic Church
5621 Elysian Fields Ave
New Orleans, LA 70122

Funeral Mass

DEC 5. 11:00 AM (CT)

St. Martin de Porres Catholic Church
5621 Elysian Fields Ave
New Orleans, LA 70122

Tribute Wall

SB

“ Angela, Melanie, Joella : It is with the deepest of sorry that I am learning of your mother's passing. Mrs. Sullivan was an excellent mentor to me. She taught me so many things but mainly how to be confident in my abilities as a professional. She lead by example. Her strength , confidence and knowledge are only a few words to describe the greatness of Mrs.Sullivan. So many of us have Mrs Sullivan to thank for who we are and where we are today. Thank you all for sharing your mother. I will never forget her and what influence she had on my life. .

Septa Holmes Blossom - December 08, 2025 at 04:16 PM

TC

“ Dear Angela and Melanie, I'm so sorry for the loss of your dear mother, she was a beautiful soul and spirit. She always left me smiling and amazed with every encounter I had with her. She gave you all her best and now she's resting with God and your dad. We will keep praying for you and your family.



Love you,
Tammy and Angela Clark.

Tammy Clark - December 05, 2025 at 11:26 AM

CL

“ Dear Melanie and Family - I am so sorry to learn about your sweet Mother.
I always enjoyed our meetings and her stories.
Sending good thoughts and heartfelt sympathy.
~from Cynthia LeBreton

Cynthia LeBreton - December 04, 2025 at 07:24 PM

MH

“ I worked as a hospital pharmacist with Doris at Methodist Hospital years ago and enjoyed and learned a lot from her every day. She was an excellent teacher when I started out and a wonderful example of a professional to all. I am glad I had the privilege of knowing and working with her. My deepest sympathy to her family. Love from Mary(Betsy) Harrison

Mary Penot Harrison - December 04, 2025 at 06:35 PM

FF

“ From the Woodson Family planted a [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) in honor of Doris Barnes Sullivan.

From the Woodson Family - December 04, 2025 at 02:07 AM

FF

“ From the Woodson Family purchased the Full Of Love Bouquet for the family of Doris Barnes Sullivan.



From the Woodson Family - December 04, 2025 at 02:07 AM

RF

“ Roslyn Johnson Smith and Family purchased the Beautiful Heart Bouquet for the family of Doris Barnes Sullivan.



Roslyn Johnson Smith and Family - December 04, 2025 at 01:04 AM

CG

“ Carla Gayle planted a [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) in honor of Doris Barnes Sullivan.

Carla Gayle - December 03, 2025 at 09:30 PM



“ Simply Elegant Spathiphyllum was purchased for the family of Doris Barnes Sullivan.



December 03, 2025 at 09:30 PM

DJ

“ Dianne J. planted a [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) in honor of Doris Barnes Sullivan.

Dianne J. - December 03, 2025 at 06:53 PM

LV

“ love Anita and Vonda planted a [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) in honor of Doris Barnes Sullivan.

love Anita and Vonda - December 03, 2025 at 03:45 PM



“ Sweet Tranquility Basket was purchased for the family of Doris Barnes Sullivan.



December 03, 2025 at 03:45 PM



“ A life well traveled. My condolences to Angela and the Sullivan family.

George R. Macri - December 03, 2025 at 03:06 PM



“ George R. Macri lit a candle in memory of Doris Sullivan



George R. Macri - December 03, 2025 at 03:02 PM



“ Sending my deepest sympathy to you from Lone Beck Vertrand

Ms.lone bertrand - December 03, 2025 at 01:06 PM



“ George R. planted a [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) in honor of Doris Barnes Sullivan.

George R. - December 03, 2025 at 09:08 AM

DT

“ Don & Sharon Thomad lit a candle in memory of Doris Sullivan



Don & Sharon Thomad - December 02, 2025 at 07:58 PM

WW

“ Wanda C. Williams planted a [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) in honor of Doris Barnes Sullivan.

Wanda C. Williams - December 02, 2025 at 07:52 PM

WW

“ Wanda C. Williams purchased the Simply Elegant Spathiphyllum for the family of Doris Barnes Sullivan.



Wanda C. Williams - December 02, 2025 at 07:52 PM

CJ

“ Charlie Jastram purchased the Divine Peace Bouquet for the family of Doris Barnes Sullivan.



Charlie Jastram - December 02, 2025 at 04:46 PM