

Peace activist nun Megan Rice dies at 91

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(Michael Patrick/Knoxville News Sentinel via AP, File)

Megan Rice, a Catholic sister and peace activist who spent two years in federal prison after breaking into a government security complex to protest nuclear weapons, has died. She was 91.

Rice spent 23 years in West Africa working as a teacher and pastoral guide. It was there that she started hearing about the Plowshares movement for peace.

When she returned to the United States, Rice began her involvement in antinuclear activism.

Court records show she had already been convicted four times for protest activities when she and two fellow Catholic peace activists, Michael Walli and Greg Boertje-

Obed, broke into the Y-12 National Security Complex in Oak Ridge, Tennessee, in July 2012.

They were arrested and charged with felony sabotage. Federal prosecutors described Rice and her codefendants as “recidivists and habitual offenders” who would break the law again “as soon as they are physically capable of doing so,” according to court records.

While testifying during her jury trial, Rice defended her decision to break into the Oak Ridge uranium facility.

“I had to do it,” she said. “My guilt is that I waited 70 years to be able to speak what I knew in my conscience.” —Associated Press