

## † Obituary

# Sister Eileen Ann Kelley

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([https://i2.wp.com/spsmw.org/wp-content/uploads/2012/10/Kelley\\_EileenAnn.jpg?ssl=1](https://i2.wp.com/spsmw.org/wp-content/uploads/2012/10/Kelley_EileenAnn.jpg?ssl=1))

*“You must make every effort to support your faith with goodness, knowledge, self-control, endurance and godliness.” (II Peter: 6-7)*

“I see these words of Peter to the early Church lived in the life of Sister Eileen Ann Kelley, as we look back on her life and ministry as a Sister of Providence. All those who knew her saw her as a woman of deep faith and prayer,” said Sister Mary Ann Phelan in her commentary for Sister Eileen Ann, who died Oct. 13, 2012.

Mary Clare Kelley, one of five children, was born to Joseph Edward Kelley and Evelyn Susannah Kennedy in Everett, Mass., on Aug. 14, 1926. Both parents were born in Prince Edward Island, Canada. She had three sisters: Jane, Eileen, our own Sister Evelyn, and one brother, the Rev. John Kelley. Evelyn and John are deceased. She attended Cheverus elementary and high school in Malden, Mass., graduating in 1944. Mary Clare entered the Sisters of Providence at Maryhurst in Rockville, Md., July 22, 1945. In 1946 she came to Saint Mary-of-the-Woods to complete her novitiate. Jan. 23 was the date of profession of first vows and of perpetual vows, in 1948 and 1953 respectively.

Sister Eileen Ann earned her bachelor's degree in elementary education from Saint Mary-of-the-Woods College and a master's degree in religious studies from Providence College in Rhode Island.

She served as teacher or school principal for 26 years in Indiana, Illinois, Massachusetts, Maryland, and the District of Columbia. For 14 of those years she was both principal and teacher. In 1970, Sister Eileen Ann was named Elementary School Coordinator for the St. Raphael Province in Fall River, Mass., and the next year was elected 2<sup>nd</sup> Provincial Councilor. In 1976, she was elected Secretary General/General Councilor of the Congregation and served in that capacity for 10 years.

After a year of sabbatical and study at Emmanuel College in Boston, Sister Eileen Ann returned to the role of principal in College Park, Md., in 1987. "Parents were so fond of her," said Sister Mary Ann, "that they wrote a letter to the provincial imploring that Sister Eileen Ann be allowed to stay as principal. 'Not only have we grown to love and respect Sister Eileen Ann, but she has brought our school into the mainstream of modern education and our program has excelled since her arrival four years ago.' Many of the parents at this location were teachers at the University of Maryland, so they were good evaluators of the type of education their children were getting."

A change did occur, however, as Sister Eileen Ann was asked in 1991 to serve as Congregation Archivist, a position she held for 14 years. She served another year as a volunteer in Archives and then retired from active ministry, continuing to assist in the myriad ministries around the motherhouse.

“We can see that Eileen Ann served in many ways, but now let’s take a little deeper look into the person herself,” related Sister Mary Ann. “All her ministries were characterized by dedication and hard work and many students and co-workers were influenced under her tutelage and leadership. As Sisters of Providence we experienced the professional expertise Eileen Ann brought to her work for the Congregation – a great sense of organization, attention to detail and accuracy, and a commitment to the importance of record-keeping and documentation of the past for the future.

“But enough about work! What about fun?” asked Sister Mary Ann. She then reiterated Sister Eileen Ann’s love of sports and avid cheering for her beloved New England Patriots or Boston Red Sox during every broadcast and how she enjoyed playing cards almost every day. She had a great sense of humor and for years kept a book of cartoons and jokes that had been cut from newspapers and books, put together for her by her sister, Evelyn.

In closing, Sister Mary Ann said, “I feel a little like the evangelist who said that there are many other things I could say about Eileen Ann, but she would want us to move on. Words from the Communion Hymn we sang shortly after learning about Sister Eileen Ann’s death Saturday morning sum up well how she lived her life:

‘We walk by faith, and not by sight:

No gracious words we hear

Of him who spoke as none e’er spoke,

But we believe him near.”

The Mass of Christian Burial for Sister Eileen Ann Kelley was celebrated Oct. 18, with the Rev. Daniel Hopcus presiding. She is survived by her two sisters, Jane Driscoll of Stoneham, Mass., and Eileen Kelley of Reading, Mass., and by nieces and nephews.

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