

## **Obituary**

Sister Ann Pauline O'Connor, IHM, 92, died Tuesday, July 23, at her home, IHM Senior Living Community in Monroe.

Sister Ann Pauline was the third of 10 children born to Cornelius and Anna (Hickey) O'Connor of Detroit. Born Feb. 23, 1927, and baptized "Cornelia Ann" at Holy Redeemer, she, with her brothers and sisters, attended Holy Redeemer Grade and High Schools. The community of Holy Redeemer remained close to Cornelia throughout her life. One year after graduation, she entered the Sisters, Servants of the Immaculate Heart of Mary, Monroe, and received the religious name, Sister Ann Pauline.



Her early ministry brought her to young students at St. Joseph and St. John, Monroe; Gesu, Detroit; and St. Stephen in Port Huron. Sister Ann Pauline earned a bachelor's degree in chemistry from Marygrove College, followed by a master's degree from Western Michigan University, Kalamazoo. Moving to secondary education, she often led chemistry courses at Sacred Heart High School, Dearborn; St. Phillip, Battle Creek; and Lumen Christi High School, Jackson. Each mission lasted at least five years, which allowed her to extend relationships into the local community. In 1979, Sister Ann Pauline was assigned to IHM-sponsored schools: St. Mary Academy, Monroe, as teacher and principal; and as a teacher at Immaculate Heart of Mary High School, Westchester, Ill.

From 1988 to 1994, Sister Ann Pauline served in community leadership as Provincial Assistant. This team was unique in that members worked and lived together on the Monroe campus and were very accessible to sisters and staff members.

While Sister Ann Pauline lived in community in Southgate, she was a steadfast educational volunteer at her alma mater, Holy Redeemer School for more than 10 years. Her wide teaching experiences helped many students succeed. In 2011, she retired to the Motherhouse and enjoyed reconnecting with and caring for many community friends.

## **Remembering**

Feb. 23, 1927, Cornelius and Anna Marie (Hickey) O'Connor were blessed with the birth of their third child, Cornelia Anne. Toddlers, Mary Ellen and John, preceded her, and three more boys and four girls would follow. So, this Irish Catholic family was a happy bunch and learned early in life how to share!

Cornelius O'Connor was an electrician and worked for Detroit Edison for over 25 years. As a child, Cornelia remembered whenever he was called out at odd times if there were power outages, how frightened she was and could not go to sleep until she knew he was home safely. Anna was a very busy housewife caring for her growing children. She was quiet, prayerful, loving and by example taught them love and respect for each other. Both parents had a deep faith that they passed on to their children, as well as their own love for learning, which helped them encourage each child to do their best in school.

The family home was in Southwest Detroit located in Holy Redeemer Parish, which was staffed by the Redemptorists Fathers. The Redemptorists motto, "With Him Is Plentiful Redemption," has a prominent place in the Church and even as a young child, Cornelia adopted that motto for herself and it influenced her life and prayer.

The children were all educated at Holy Redeemer Grade and High Schools. Cornelia was a good student and graduated in 1945. Having completed 12 years under the influence of the IHM Sisters, she was attracted to their teaching profession and their lifestyle. However, she enrolled at Marygrove College for a year before entering the congregation.

Sept. 8, 1946, she came to Monroe and entered the Postulate beginning her journey in religious life. She was received into the Novitiate Aug. 15, 1947 and given the name Ann Pauline. As a second year Novice, she was sent out on mission for her first teaching experience and after profession her many fruitful years in the classroom began.

For the next 14 years she taught middle and upper grades in Detroit, Port Huron and Battle Creek. Then, twenty-one years in high school in Dearborn, Jackson and Westchester, Ill., mainly science and math, as well as serving as principal at St. Mary Academy for three years. For the next six years, she graciously accepted

the invitation to join the Motherhouse Province Team. When this was completed, one would think that retirement was in order, but a call for volunteers in the Gem Room at Holy Redeemer was answered by Ann Pauline. Because of her years of teaching both middle school and high school subjects, she was an invaluable asset, able to help any child in any subject. She was also called upon to serve on boards, judge science fairs or be part of a team evaluating schools.

She was always careful to take quality time for prayer and recreation-planning for retreats and vacation. She loved the time she could spend with some of her family on camping trips in the Upper Peninsula. Her swimming group loved early evenings at Sterling State Park and her travel group went to the east coast one year and traveled toward the West another. She loved nature and often slipped away to Hidden Gardens. The trip she took with the Motherhouse Team to the British Isles was unforgettable and the time spent in Ireland was always treasured. Her life in community was richly blessed with beautiful friendships and living with loving communities.

In August 2011, it was time to return to the Motherhouse. More time for prayer and serving others here. Even as her own health was failing, she found time and energy to visit her friends in health care, assisting them in whatever way she could. Her life was one of giving. She generously shared the gifts with which God blessed her. We thank you for your life with us and for the many ways you have enriched our lives. We rejoice with you now as you join your family, friends and all our sisters who have gone before you in praising the God you loved and served so well.

Written and delivered by Margaret Babcock, IHM  
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