

In Loving Memory

Sister Patricia [Stephen Ann] Callahan, SSND



Birth
August 3, 1928

Baptism
August 26, 1928

Profession
August 1, 1952

Death
May 4, 2012

Burial
Sancta Maria
in Ripa Cemetery
St. Louis, Missouri

*Precious and blessed is
the death of the faithful
before God... for
they die in union with
their dear Jesus, in the
grace of God, in peace.*

Blessed Theresa of Jesus Gerhardinger
Foundress of the School Sisters of Notre Dame
Letter 11, September 10, 1831

The only girl of Mildred [Teper] and Sidney Callahan was born on August 3, 1928, in St. Louis, Mo. She was baptized at Our Lady of Visitation Church on August 26, 1928, and received the name Patricia Ann. Following in the footsteps of her two older brothers, Eugene and Robert, she chose softball, cork ball, marbles, etc. for her “fun time” during her childhood.

Patricia entered kindergarten at the Cote Brillante public school at the age of five. Because of distance and lack of transportation, she was transferred to St. Matthew’s Catholic school when she began grade two. During this year, she received her first Holy Communion and was confirmed. The following year, she entered Farragut Public School to complete her elementary education. She graduated from Beaumont High School and then attended Harris Teacher’s College for one year.

In 1947, Patricia took a summer job as a clerk/secretary and receptionist in the Personnel Division of the newly formed St. Louis Police Academy. At the end of the summer, she found the job so exciting and interesting that she quit college and took a full time position. She was the only woman allowed to work in the building. During the next three years, several co-workers had a profound influence upon her and she began to think of her spiritual life.

A favorite cousin, the future Sister Timothy Ann [Dorothy] Callahan, entered the candidature and Pat had her first contact with the School Sisters of Notre Dame. She became the self-appointed chauffeur for the candidates who were teaching and one April day attended a day of recollection at Ripa while waiting to take them back to their missions. She met Mother Evangela Wagner and Sister Paulissa Klass and before she knew it, she was signed up to enter the candidature in June. Her mother and brother were not pleased with this but her father was delighted. On June 16, 1950, she drove her parents and brother to Ripa, changed into the Candidate garb and reluctantly handed the car keys to Robert and began her new life.

During the second semester in the candidature, she was missioned to Sacred Heart in Fort Madison, Iowa to teach fifth grade children. She was received into the novitiate on July 30, 1951, and given the name M. Stephen Ann. She professed first vows on August 1, 1952, two days before her 24th birthday. She professed final vows on August 1, 1958.

Sister Patricia taught elementary students for 18 years at All Souls, Overland, Mo.; St. Mary, Alton, Ill.; St. Joseph, Farmington, Mo.; St. Dominic, Breese, Ill., St. Gerard Majella, San Antonio, Texas; St. Anthony, Effingham, Ill. and Our Lady of Perpetual Help, St. Louis, Mo. She was an elementary principal for 17 years at St. Anthony, Effingham, Ill.; St. Peter Cathedral, Belleville, Ill.; Our Lady of Loretto, St. Louis, Mo.; Ste. Genevieve, Ste. Genevieve, Mo. and Holy Family, Hannibal, Mo.

She also ministered as an associate superintendent of schools for the Springfield, Ill. diocese and the Kansas City/St. Joseph, Mo. diocese. In Springfield and, Kansas City, she was the only School Sister of Notre Dame

continued

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and lived with several other congregations of women religious. In the mid-1980s, she gave service for two years as the administrator of Notre Dame Hall, St. Louis, Mo.

In 1999, she sustained injuries that forced her to retire from the active teaching ministry. When she regained her mobility, she resided and volunteered at Pope John Paul II Apartments in Florissant, Mo. and later at the Cardinal Ritter Institute in St. Louis. In August 2007, she was missioned to Veronica House. She was transferred to Anna House on May 3, 2012, and placed on hospice. She died peacefully the next day at 3:50 p.m.

A wake/vigil was held at Anna House and Theresa Center on May 7, 2012. The Mass of Christian Burial was celebrated the following morning with Rev. Ron Chochol presiding. Interment was in the Ripa cemetery. Sister Patricia is survived by her sister-in-law, Peggy Callahan of Laguna, CA, nephews, nieces, cousins, numerous friends and SSNDs.

Sister Patricia was an excellent educator, administrator and superintendent of schools. As a strict but dedicated and caring person, she touched the lives of hundreds of children and their families. A careful listener and wise counselor, she was in touch with the reality of people's lives. She deeply loved her family, was the memory of family stories and readily shared them with the next generation. She enjoyed a good game of bridge, playing bingo and listening to the St. Louis Cardinals' baseball games.

Always grateful for the least of what was given to her or done for her, Sister Patricia embraced her diminishment with grace. Her Irish wit and humor, warm smile, friendly disposition and love of God enabled her to enjoy life and share her religious life with many lay and religious friends. May she now rejoice in her new and eternal life as she celebrates her Diamond Jubilee of religious profession with her family, friends and SSNDs who have gone before her!

By Sister Carol Marie Wildt, SSND

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