

# Remembering



Eleanor Eagan, CSJ

May 8, 1929 – June 22, 2017

**E**leanor Jane Eagan was born at home on May 8, 1929 in Bay Shore, New York. Her 15 year old sister Virginia, having recently learned about the progressive Eleanor Roosevelt, suggested the name.

The youngest of five children, Eleanor was raised in a progressive family. Helen Flynn and James Eagan were actively involved in the Long Island civic community, as well as the St. Patrick Parish community. They quietly role modeled involvement and service to their two daughters and three sons. Helen worked with the Catholic, Jewish, and Protestant ladies to attain appreciation and unity. James, called Mr. Bay Shore, quietly bartered food for depression families.

Eleanor followed brother Gerard to St. Patrick School and fully expected to follow him to Bay Shore High School. But late in August, mother announced a special trip to Brentwood, and in a matter of minutes Eleanor was enrolled in the Academy of St. Joseph. The tuition fee of \$200 was only possible because brother Jimmy, serving in the South Pacific, generously sent home his army pay check to be used wherever needed.

**E**ven though Ellie's mother deemed Brentwood a necessity, her daughter screamed "You're trying to make a nun out of me." The tables were turned in 1946 when Ellie responded to her mother's inquiry about future plans, "I'm thinking of entering the convent." In her customary

laconic message, mother said emphatically, "You're too young." End of discussion. In 1950, when Ellie informed the family of her upcoming entrance day, her rebel brother Jack responded, "I think you're a fool but as long as you're going, please try to be a good nun!"

**O**ver the years, through diverse and demanding responsibilities, Sister Eleanor came to a great appreciation for her family and her CSJ community for the education and professional preparation provided. A 1946 graduate of the Academy in Brentwood, New York, she completed her BA in English and French at Mount St. Mary's College. Her MA in English and American Literature was earned at Stanford University. She also pursued studies in Journalism at San Jose State University, counseling at Loyola University and the University of Windsor Ontario, and Theology at Saint Mary's College and the School of Applied Theology in Berkeley.

Eleanor also treasured two special memories— serving as "perita" for channel 4 during John Paul's San Francisco visit and singing with the Carondelet's Adult Choir at the Salzburg Choral Festival.

After twenty years teaching or administering in Southern California high schools, Sister began a 35-year career at Carondelet High School. She taught Religious Studies and English for eight years, followed by service in Admissions, Alumnae Relations, College Counseling and Public Relations. Her last assignment, requested by her professional

colleague and collaborator, Sister Kathleen Lang, was the researching and writing of Valiant Women, the 50-year history of The School.

**S**ister Eleanor retired in 2016 and joined Holy Family Community in May 2016, bringing with her an immense appreciation for family, friends, former students, CSJ community and all

who shared her love for words, her uniquely Eastern perspective and her quirky Eagan humor.

Rest in peace, Ellie! You did it your way! ☞

~ Written by Sister Eleanor Eagan, CSJ

