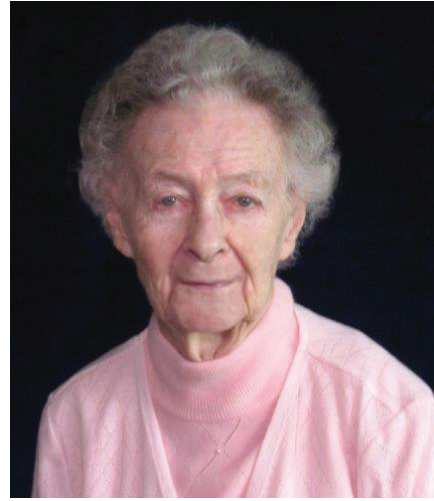


Remembering



Madeline Keaney, CSJ

June 5, 1923 – October 22, 2017

Sister Madeline Keaney was born in DeSoto, Missouri; also the birthplace of her father, Thomas Jerome Keaney.

Madeline's mother, Gertrude Hazel Tobin, was born in San Jose, California. Madeline Mary was the fifth of seven children. There were two boys and five girls. One sister, Sister Lucy (Trudy), was a Benedictine Sister in Cottonwood, Idaho. Trudy died a few years ago. Maddie wrote to Trudy every week for many years, and Trudy called Maddie every week. Birth order of the children is Thomas, Margaret, Ann, Gertrude, Madeline, Jerry, and one sister who died as a young woman. After her large family moved to California, they lived in the San Francisco area for many years, and enjoyed the beauty of the city and the beaches.

In 1936 Madeline enrolled in the 3rd grade at Star of the Sea. The first Sister of St. Joseph she met was Sister Mercedes. Maddie enjoyed school and loved the order of the

classroom. She graduated from Star of the Sea Academy in June 1944, and entered the Sisters of St. Joseph on September 1, 1944 at St. Mary's Academy in Los Angeles. She received the habit and name of Sister Madeline Therese on March 19, 1945, made first profession on August 15, 1947, and final vows on August 15, 1950. Sister chose to change her name from Sister Madeline Therese to Sister Madeline in 1969.

Maddie was a private person who preferred to remain behind the scenes. She was an excellent teacher, and taught primary grades

for 40 years in many locations. Her first mission was to the Children's Home in Idaho, where she returned some years later for a second time. Later missions included Lewiston, San Francisco, Pasco, Fresno, Oxnard, and three locations in Hawaii, where she lived for a total of eight years. Maddie liked to teach the boys, enjoying their high spirits. She well

remembered her little students and their various antics. Maddie loved little children and could easily identify with their childhood struggles. She seemed to be especially aware of children and others who were fragile. She was a good teacher, very conscientious about grading papers. Every night she brought home piles of papers to correct. Her care of details was notable throughout her life as well.

Maddie saw the positive side of people. She had no use for complaints or whining. She has been described as thoughtful and down to earth. It was refreshing to know she said just what she thought. One sister recalled Maddie offering to get up at 2 am to administer medications to another sister who was ill.

In 1990 Maddie came to Carondelet Center to work as mailroom assistant. After twelve years, in January 2002, she became a member of Holy Family Community and continued to volunteer in various capacities. In 2004 Sister Mary Sevilla wrote about all the volunteer services Maddie did around Carondelet Center, she wrote, "One could get exhausted following Maddie around. The list is not complete, but gives us an idea of her creative energy to assist. She organized materials in Holy Family, worked in the large dining room and dish room, got up early to delivery the many daily newspapers to various locations, swept the breezeway and emptied trash, worked as mailroom assistant, and in the chapel."

Maddie loved to keep busy. Her quick moving eyes indicated an eager mind that was constantly searching. There was a certain eagerness and restlessness about her. For many years she had an ageless appearance. Her deepest

emotions she kept to herself. She was also a prayerful person, faithful to her daily time for prayer. Maddie was devoted to Mary and often prayed the rosary during the day.

Those who have lived with Maddie came to know that behind her quiet demeanor was a generous, insightful and hardworking individual. She had a great sense of humor. One sister said that Maddie hardly ate anything at dinner, but she enjoyed being with the sisters she knew and trusted, and liked the dinnertime foolishness. To know Maddie is to know she was a walker. Many days she walked along the beach for hours, relishing the beauty and solitude. She was friendly with public transportation and often walked long distances to access buses from Oxnard to Ventura. She recalls one time when she over exerted walking from the hospital to home and suffered a heart attack as she returned home.

Her love of animals sometimes overcame her better judgment, especially when she put out food for the neighborhood dogs or for the crows and coyotes. At Holy Family she often sat and watched the beautiful fish in the aquarium. No doubt it reminded her of the lovely days when she was missioned in Hawaii.

Toward the end of her life she struggled to perform her daily routine. After a stroke she remained in bed more often, then became unable to care for herself. Her prayer was for God to take her home to be with Trudy.

Maddie, we thank you for your example of saying only good about others, and your desire to perform tasks large and small for the dear neighbor. May our loving and gracious God now reward you for being enough, for doing enough, and that every dream and wish you had be fulfilled abundantly. ✨

~ Written by Sister Frances Baker, CSJ

