

Obituary



Sister Sally Lannen, IHM, 94, died Saturday, June 4 in the IHM Health Care Center where she had been a resident since 2010.

Sister Sally was born on Feb. 13, 1922, in Detroit to Joseph and Irene (Kralek) Lannen. She graduated from St. Mary of Redford Grade and High Schools and entered the Sisters, Servants of the Immaculate Heart of Mary in Monroe in 1941 and received the religious name, Sister Josanne. This year she was to observe her 75th Jubilee as an IHM Sister.

Sister Sally earned a bachelor's degree from Marygrove College and a master's degree from Marquette University, Milwaukee. Her early teaching ministry focused on the junior and high school grade levels in a *variety* of subjects at St. Felicitas, Chicago; St. Michael, Flint, Mich.; Holy Redeemer, Detroit and St. Patrick, Wyandotte, Mich. She spent several years in Puerto Rico, teaching at La Merced and Santa Teresita and also at Stella Maris International School in Kobe, Japan. Returning to the United States, she served at Lumen Cristi High School, Jackson, Mich.; and also at Immaculate Heart of Mary High School and St. Felicitas in Illinois. Her continued studies in Michigan took her to Wayne State University, the University of Michigan, University of Detroit and St. John Seminary. She also studied in Chicago at De Paul University and the University of Scranton and Westminster College, both in Pennsylvania.

In 1993 Sister Sally returned to Michigan and ministered in several positions at Lumen Cristi High School in Jackson. She enjoyed her retirement and volunteer years spent in the Jackson community. Declining health brought her home to the IHM Motherhouse and Health Care Center in 2010.

Remembering

Sally was born on Feb. 13, 1922, in Detroit and baptized Sarah Ann at All Saints Parish. Her parents were Joseph Patrick and Irene Marie (Karlak) Lannen. On her father's side, the family was Irish and on her mother's side, the family was Bohemian. Joseph and Irene had a family of six children: one son Robert, and five daughters, Aileen, Kathleen (Kate), Sarah, Patricia (Tish) and Jean. The Wholihans lived next door. Jean married Dick Wholihan; thus, their tribe increased by many.

One day when Sally was in fourth grade, her father picked up the children from school and they were pretty excited about their upcoming report cards. They were negotiating with their father for a quarter for A's, a dime for B's and a nickel for C's. "No deal," he said, "but I'll give any one of you a five dollar bill for a Z." Not to be outdone, Sally asked sister if she would do that for her. And do you know, she did! It wasn't clear how she got it past the pastor who gave out the report cards, but Sally got her Z! And the \$5, too!

At St. Mary of Redford High School, Sally was active in the drama club and had the lead part in a play called *Cyclone Sally*. You can bet that was a barrel of fun. After high school, Sally went to Marygrove College for a semester. She entered the Postulate at St. Mary Convent in Monroe on Feb. 8, 1941, when she was 18. She said she wanted to be like that sister who gave her the Z. She received the name Sister Josanne as she entered the Novitiate.

In September 1943, she was assigned to St. Mary, Mt. Morris, Mich., for three years. Then she went to St. Felicitas, Chicago, for seven years. Sally also taught at St. Mary Academy, Monroe; Holy Redeemer, Detroit; IHM High School, Westchester, Ill., one year in Puerto Rico and five years at St. Mary of Redford.

In 1975 Sally answered a call to go to Japan to teach as Stella Maris International School, where Sister Letitia O'Connell was teaching. Sally was there from September 1975, until sometime in 1977, teaching ethics for grades seven-12; English and speech classes. She also taught a First Communion class and sang in the church choir. There was a lay missionary teaching there named Joan Fischer. They befriended each other, took in the culture together and remained friends for many years.

Back in the states again, Sally taught a course at Jackson Community College, aiding the parents of "at-risk" juveniles in the management of their children.

From September 1977 through January 1979, Sally taught at Lumen Christi High School, Jackson, Mich. She finished out the year at Franklin Elementary School, Coldwater, Mich., where she taught some classes in Junior Great Books.

Sally was called back to IHM High School, Westchester in 1979 and remained there until 1987, working as school secretary. During the Christmas season of 1980, Sally worked as a clerk in Lord and Taylor's department store. "This served as a therapeutic opportunity to work with adults in the community, serving their needs in a non-teaching position," she said on her commitment form. "For me it was a fine

opportunity to share with other women their views of home, family, the church and their lives."

Sally became school secretary at St. Felicitas, Chicago from 1987–93. The next year she returned to Lumen Christi in Jackson as clerk for the Dean of Students until 1997. For the next 10 years, until 2008, she served as assistant sacristan (helping Honey Graziadei.)

Raphaelle (Honey) Graziadei, a teacher at Lumen Christi, asked Sally if she would like to live with her. Sally's provincial, Sister Mary Ann Markel, suggested she try it. They lived together for nearly 20 years and became very good friends. We saw this beautiful gift of friendship lived out in their lives, even after Sally retired to the Motherhouse. Honey became an IHM Associate in 1982; Sally was her sponsor. Sometime later, Sally sponsored Rosie Peters, the sister of Alice Baker, IHM, as she became an IHM Associate.

Sally received a Fulbright grant to study in Adis Ababa, Ethiopia, in 1965. There, she met a young man she had taught at St. Mary, Mt. Clemens (1953–56). "Sr. Josanne, what are you doing here?" he queried. "Looking for you, Pete Galanti," she replied. When Pete's class celebrated their 50-year reunion, Sally was invited. She kept the class picture in the window box outside her room.

Another time, Sisters Carol Reddy and Sally were invited to a reunion at St. Felicitas. Neither of them had much money, so she wrote a "pretend grant proposal" to the class, asking for a grant to cover their expenses. The class thought it was so clever, they covered the cost of the train to Chicago, met them at the train, took them to a hotel and treated them royally.

Many of Sally's former students became faithful friends who kept in touch with her. One of these friends, Rita, from St. Felicitas, recounted that she had not thought of herself as very smart when in grade five, but that Sister Sally helped her a lot. (Sally didn't remember putting herself out much to help little Rita.) "You got us running races on the playground and I won the Fifth Grade race and the Sixth Grade race, too. That's when I began to feel so much better about myself. I continued running, and I've run in three Boston marathons."

Sally applied for and obtained grants to study in Pennsylvania, Colorado, Ohio, Oregon, Valley Forge and West Point. (She helped Tom Kauza get into West Point and he invited her to his graduation. Now, Tom and his wife live not too far from here, in Woodhaven.) Honey also received grants, so they traveled together and thus spent some delightful summers in each other's company.

For years, Sally wrote articles and book reviews for *Spinnaker*. She kept a scrapbook of them. Her cleverness manifested itself on her commitment forms, too. In 1984, when asked: "How is your ministry a proclamation of the Good News?" Her answer: "part of the Good News is that I have a job!" In 2002 Sally wrote: "At age 80 my main area of study is for my final exam which could be scheduled at any moment."

In more serious tones, Sally wrote: "I hope to be known as Jesus' disciple by my love for others – all whom my life touches." Honey says that Sally was a great "pray-er," praying for students and friends faithfully. She attended daily Mass and had a regular adoration hour at Queen of the Miraculous Medal Church, Jackson. She did not hesitate to share her spirituality.

In 2010 Sally moved to the Motherhouse and into the Memory Care Unit. Honey tells us that Sally was quite content in Memory Care and received wonderful care. Sally and Jean Burbo did their best to keep staff and residents happy and laughing and by showing their wonderful love.

This past January, Sally's sister Aileen died and Honey attended the funeral in Sally's place. Honey also stood in for Sally at the Archdiocesan Jubilee celebration on June 4. Sally was to have celebrated her 75th Jubilee as an IHM.

Sally loved Our Lady, so it was no surprise that she died on the feast of the Immaculate Heart of Mary. When Sally slipped away at 8:37 p.m., Honey was singing a song they often sang together:

*Turn your eyes upon Jesus;
look full on His wonderful face.
And the things of earth
will grow strangely dim
in the light of His Glory and Grace.*

Honey said of this: "She had an awesome death, and I was so honored to be there."

Written and delivered by Roberta Richmond, IHM
June 8, 2016