

Obituary



Sister Catherine Broughton, IHM, 93, died Thursday, Feb. 21 at her home, the IHM Motherhouse in Monroe.

Catherine Rose was born on July 25, 1925, in Wyandotte, Mich., to Delbert and Winona Mary (Beattie) Broughton. The family made their home in St. Patrick Parish and Catherine attended Labadie School and St. Patrick for grade school. Upon graduation from St. Patrick High School, she entered the Sisters, Servants of the Immaculate Heart of Mary, Monroe, and received

the religious name, Sister Mary Delbert.

Sister Catherine began her ministry in education and served throughout Michigan at St. Charles, Coldwater; St. Michael, Flint; St. Gregory, St. Cecilia, Christ the King and St. Vincent, Detroit; St. Mary, Marshall; St. Mary, Milford; St. Mary Academy, Monroe; and St. Hugo, Bloomfield Hills. She returned to Wyandotte and served as principal at St. Patrick, at Wyandotte Central Catholic and Wyandotte Catholic Consolidated Schools.

Her education included earning a bachelor's degree from Marygrove College and later, a master's degree from Wayne State University, Detroit. Sister Catherine continued studies for teaching certifications and personal interest in education techniques, pastoral counseling and women's collegiate sports. Later in her educational career, she spent a year of renewal at Notre Dame University and returned to teaching at St. Anne School in Hazel Crest, Ill.

Sister Catherine had many interests: from 1985 to 1988, she served her community as a baker and manager in the Motherhouse food service operation; in 1992, she was assistant director of Dukette Catholic School, Flint; and worked in child care from 1994 to 2000 in Highland and Milford, Mich. When she retired to the Motherhouse in 2003, she volunteered in the Library and Resource Center and operated the in-house cable television system for residents.

Remembering

I'm beginning with a quote: "I just go with the flow; it's easier to go over the bumps."

Doesn't that sound like the Catherine we knew and loved!

Catherine was born in 1925 in Wyandotte, Mich. Her mother was Winona Mary Beattie Broughton and her father was Delbert William Broughton. She had one sister, Margaret, and two brothers, Delbert and Gilbert. She listed her heritage as German, Irish, English Dutch and Scotch. Catherine wrote:

"My parents were very religious, church-going people. Their family was their primary concern. I was brought up to be aware of those who did not have what I had, and to share with others. Because I was involved in many sports while growing up, I was known as a 'tomboy.' My dad had been in the seminary, and thus we were instilled with many religious principles and moral conduct."

Catherine attended St. Patrick School in Wyandotte and began thinking about being a sister in grade three. Her mother had two cousins who were religious, and they would visit her family. Little Catherine began playing nun when she was just 8 years old. The Eucharist was also very important to her parents, and she attended daily Mass with them during Advent and Lent. Catherine wrote:

"In my sixth year of school I had a very special teacher. Her quiet, concerned manner instilled in me the desire to be just like her. This, I believe was the beginning of being called. As I grew older I was more interested in sports than anything else, and I continued to bury this idea. I was a senior in high school before I finally decided that God was not going to let me alone until I tried religious life. The final sign came when I was a playground supervisor. Some children informed me that they would not be able to attend a Catholic school because there were not enough nuns to teach. 'This is it; I have to go!' was my response.

"I entered the Postulate on Sept. 8, 1943 (to test whether I belonged). As I knelt in front of Mary's statue I knew I was home. Many happenings after this were confusing, and I was filled with doubt but with each occurrence a return to Mary's statue straightened out the difficulty, and I continued on 'til Aug. 15, 1944. The Novitiate was a time of real trial and error, and

uncertainty. With each up and down I realized I was not traveling alone. At times I wondered what I had gotten into and the answer kept coming back – all this too will change.”

Catherine’s ministry for 45 years was education, whether it was in a parish, the classroom or as the principal. She taught at schools in Flint, Coldwater, Detroit, Marshall, Wyandotte, Bloomfield Hills and Monroe, Mich. and in South Bend, Ind., Chicago and Hazel Crest, Ill.

In the 1960s, Catherine became good friends with Sister Lois Logan and Sister Jane Arthur Duffy. The three always enjoyed each other’s company and many card games. Lois and Catherine traveled a lot. They were fortunate to go to Alaska and to Hawaii among many other places. Catherine always felt that travel made her a better teacher. Lois died on Feb. 21, 2011, and Catherine died on the very same day just eight years later.

Shortly after the renovation of the Motherhouse in 2003, Lois and Catherine ministered together in the bookstore, LARC, here at the Motherhouse. Catherine loved working in LARC and was heartbroken when it closed in 2006. After that, she worked in the Library. She also helped to broadcast Mass and other programs on the inhouse television station.

Catherine wrote:

“My journey has been a checker board, a time of wearing many hats, a time of challenge and mistakes, a time of growth, change, enrichment, heartache, disappointment, and new beginnings. I have been blessed and cared for. I am grateful to the many who have journeyed with me these many years. I am who I am only because of the God who made me and has gifted me with so many blessings within this Community. It is truly great to be an IHM!”

Written and delivered by Roberta Richmond, IHM
Feb. 25, 2019