

## Obituary



Sister Suzanne Molloy, IHM, 92, died Friday, Feb. 23, at her home, the IHM Senior Living Community in Monroe, Mich.

Born on Sept. 21, 1925 to James and Frances (Dywer) Molloy of Detroit, Sister Suzanne was baptized at St. Gregory, Detroit. Along with her sister and brother, she attended Blessed Sacrament Elementary and High Schools in Detroit. Two years after graduation, she entered the Sisters, Servants of the Immaculate Heart of Mary, Monroe, and received the religious name, Sister

James Ann. Her brother and sister both entered religious life as a diocesan priest and an IHM Sister, respectively, in addition to extended family vocations.

After earning her bachelor's degree from Marygrove College, Sister Suzanne began her teaching career at Holy Trinity and at St. Cecilia, Detroit; St. Mary, Akron, Ohio; Holy Name, Birmingham, Mich., and at St. John, Monroe. She completed studies to earn a Master of Education degree from the University of Detroit. Sister Suzanne advanced to the position of principal, serving for a number of years at St. Cyprian, Riverview, Mich., and at Nativity School, Hollywood, Fla.

As a native of Detroit, she held a great devotion to Capuchin Franciscan Father Solanus Casey. The relationship was family-like, as he was brother of her Uncle Edward Casey, who was married to her Aunt Mary (Molloy) Casey.

In 1982, Sister Suzanne began a sabbatical year at the IHM summer residence in Kingsville, Ontario, Canada. Returning to Monroe, she served in a variety of capacities: directing the Pagani Retreat Center, as a secretary at Norman Towers and teaching at St. Patrick, Carleton. She also served her community for more than 10 years as switchboard operator, driver and assistant sacristan; as support staff in the St. Mary Conference Center; and volunteering wherever needed. At age 80, she retired. In 2008, she moved to the Health Care Center.

## Remembering

Helpful, reliable, outgoing, an excellent teacher, an efficient and understanding administrator—some of the characteristics professional peers used to describe Suzanne Molloy. Witty, kind, prayerful, loyal, dedicated and generous are traits mentioned by her religious classmates and those sisters with whom she lived and ministered. In 2001, Suzanne became very serious about writing her autobiography. Most of what is presented here comes from her writings, her personal chronology and private papers.

Suzanne was born in St. Joseph Hospital, Detroit, on Sept. 21, 1925. Her parents were James Francis and Frances Veronica (Dwyer) Molloy. On her maternal side, her grandparents originated in Peterborough, Canada, while her great-grandparents came from County Clare, Ireland. At some point in their history, the Dwyers moved to Midland, Michigan where Suzanne's mother was born in 1892. On her paternal side, Suzanne's grandparents migrated from Donegal, Ireland, to the United States, specifically Washington, where her father was born.

The lucrative lumber industry in the Pacific Northwest enticed the Dwyer family to move to both Seattle and to British Columbia. As a result of this move, Frances Dwyer received her nurse's training at St. Mary Hospital in Juneau, Alaska. Upon graduating from the nursing program, she began her nursing career in the interior of Alaska where she met James Molloy, a land surveyor from Seattle.

When World War I broke out, the Dwyers returned to Detroit. James Molloy followed Frances to Detroit where they were married in St. Benedicts Church on Sept. 8, 1918. They had three children: James, the eldest, Suzanne and the youngest, Agnes May.

Although drafted into the army during World War I, Mr. Molloy never served overseas due to health problems. When Suzanne was 2 years old, her father died, leaving her mother a widow at age 35. Suzanne had no recollection of her dad, although she heard many stories about him. Certainly she knew he was loved and admired by his in-laws as well as his own family.

Of her early life, Suzanne indicates that she didn't always appreciate having six mothers: her grandmother, her own mother plus four aunts (Aunt Minnie, Aunt Pat, Aunt Jo, Aunt Mae and, added to this list, Gertrude Dwyer, an aunt by marriage). Yet, she prayed for them each day for their life-long support of her widowed mother and the loving care of her children.

Suzanne's brother James was ordained a priest on April 23, 1950. This was a very happy occasion for the family. Her younger sister, Agnes May, entered the Monroe IHMs in 1944 and was laicized in 1962. Two of Suzanne's paternal aunts were Sisters of the Holy Name in Portland, Ore.

Suzanne indicates in her autobiography that her only claim to fame was their connection to Father Solanus Casey, OFM Cap. Her father's sister, Mary Molloy, married Leo Casey, brother of Father Solanus. Suzanne's uncle, Denis Molloy, married a niece of Father Solanus. The Molloy's became Solanus' family in Detroit since his family and

siblings had moved to Seattle. The Molloyes were honored when Father Solanus dined at their home on many occasions.

Suzanne mentions very little about her childhood other than attending Barbour Public School in the first grade and at St. Mary Academy, Windsor, Ontario, Canada, for grades two and three. She completed elementary and high school at Blessed Sacrament, Detroit. After finishing high school, Suzanne enrolled at Marygrove College and completed her freshman and sophomore years before entering the Sisters, Servants of the Immaculate Heart of Mary in 1946. At reception, she received religious name Sister James Ann. She made her first vows in January 1949 and final vows on Jan. 2, 1952.

As an IHM, James Ann earned her Bachelor of Arts degree from Marygrove in 1951 and a Master of Arts in education from the University of Detroit in 1957. Her post-graduate studies were accomplished at Northern Illinois University, DeKalb, Ill.; Oakland University, Rochester, Mich.; and Nova University, Fort Lauderdale, Fla.

Suzanne's teaching assignments covered the elementary grades at St. John, Monroe; Holy Trinity and St. Cecilia, Detroit; Holy Name, Birmingham; St. Mary, Sycamore Ill.; and St. Mary, Akron, Ohio.

Critics, teachers and supervisors identified Suzanne as an excellent teacher who involved her students in the topic at hand; she was creative, well-organized and orderly. She handled her classes firmly but without squelching their spirit. She was known and commended for her openness to new ideas and a willingness to explore ways to incorporate them into her classes.

From 1964 until 1970, Suzanne was assigned as superior and principal of St. Cyprian in Riverview, Mich. In 1975, she began a seven-year ministry assigned as principal of Nativity School in Hollywood, Fla. In 1983, she was assigned to Crawfton in Kingston, Ontario, but later that year was asked to be the interim principal of St. John, Monroe. As usual, Suzanne applied her gifts and abilities to each position held, doing God's will in whatever she was asked to do.

She enjoyed traveling. Her most memorable experiences were a cruise to the inland passage of Alaska with her favorite cousin; a trip to Ireland with three cousins; and a two-week tour of Rome with classmate, Margaret Ann Henige, IHM.

Throughout her entire life, Suzanne had a deep love and faith in God's everlasting love and forgiveness. This was a constant in Suzanne's life. It was this that kept her going in the ups and downs of her family life and the ups and downs of religious life.

"My gratitude to the Sisters, Servants of the Immaculate Heart of Mary for my formation, education, and professional skills. Most of all, I am very grateful for the support I received regarding my family concerns. The IHM leadership has stood by me."

Thank you, Sister Suzanne, for all you gave to our community, for your loyalty and your generous commitment in ministry. We shall pray with you and for you. You are now at peace in and with Jesus.

Written by Josephine M. Sferrella, IHM (August 2010)

Delivered by Marie Clark, IHM