



## *Sisters of St. Francis of Mary Immaculate*

As Pope Francis, along with Franciscans throughout the world, celebrated with great joy the feast of God's Troubadour, our Sister Alcuin peacefully completed her *transitus* from this life to eternal life, a passage accompanied at its end by the soft notes of sparrows whose autumn medley gave expression to the heartfelt religious sentiment that served to orient the life of our beloved violoncellist: "*solī Deo gloria* - glory to God alone." (JS Bach)

Born in Sidney, Nebraska, on July 23, 1917, Agnes Kelly was the third of twelve children born to Francis and Anna (Reinke) Kelly. As a young child, she moved with her family from Nebraska's panhandle to Falls City in the southeastern part of the state. Raised in Saints Peter and Paul Parish, she attended Lake Side Public School and Sacred Heart Academy where she was taught by the Ursuline sisters. As a young adolescent, following the example of her two older sisters, Bernardine and Marie Terese, Agnes made her way to Joliet, Illinois, to become an aspirant with the Sisters of St. Francis of Mary Immaculate. She attended St. Francis Academy and as her 16th birthday approached, with a supportive recommendation from her aspirant mistress, Sister Apollonia, she prepared to enter the Postulancy in the Fall of 1933. In August of 1934, she was received as novice by Mother Thomasine and given her religious name, Sr. Mary Alcuin. Two years later, she professed her first vows and proceeded on her journey into an unfolding future of 80 years of consecrated life as a Joliet Franciscan.

Blessed from an early age with a natural giftedness for the performing arts, Sr. Alcuin was both a talented musician and dedicated music educator. Graduating from the College of St. Francis in 1938, she was admitted to the renowned American Conservatory of Music in Chicago five years later. There, she studied under the direction of exceptional musicians and majored in the study of violoncello, her favorite instrument. Over the course of 67 years, from 1936 until 2003, she instructed and encouraged countless students. Whether she was teaching a class or giving a private lesson, she held fast to the conviction that "music's only purpose should be for the glory of God and the recreation of the human spirit." Among the highlights of her own musical endeavors and accomplishments, she took great pride in being part of the "Sisters' Summer Orchestra" at the College of St. Francis, where Sisters from various communities studied and performed music together so as to provide the broader Joliet community with an experience of live musical concerts. Eager to "love God and serve her students at the highest level of

# Alleluia!



*Sister M. Alcuin Kelly, OSF*

competency," Sr. Alcuin went on to do further graduate studies at the American Conservatory of Music, this time with a particular focus on Public School Music. Granted a Master of Music Education degree in June of 1955, she made the very most of her education and delighted in every opportunity to further the love of music among her Sisters and her students. Making the study and appreciation of music accessible to the many and not simply the privilege of the few, she enabled others not only to perform and understand music, but also to create music and comprehend the connections between music and lived experience.

In her later years, Sr. Alcuin distinguished herself not only as a lifelong learner, but also as an accomplished artisan. With diligence and joy she sought to deepen her understanding of the Franciscan Tradition through various courses and workshops on the writings and legends of Francis and Clare as well as the spiritual treatises of Bonaventure. Hook and yarn in hand, she tirelessly crocheted afghans, scarves and booties for young and old alike. An avid reader drawn into the stories of others, she also possessed a contemplative readiness to ponder her own story as she returned to God all that she had received - body, mind and spirit. Fondly remembered for her kindness and quiet disposition, Sr. Alcuin also was known for her frontier frankness, her ethic of hard work, her personal striving to grow in grace and to experience music as a "vehicle of the Holy Spirit."

As we give thanks to our good and gracious God for the life of our Sister, Alcuin, let us pray that she will be welcomed into paradise by an "orchestra of angels" making music before the Lord on stringed instruments of every sort and size and origin. And let us hope that along with her eternal reward, our Sister Alcuin will find an extra cello waiting just for her that she may play before the glory of the Lord for all eternity! Alleluia, alleluia!

## *Sister M. Alcuin Kelly OSF*

*July 23, 1917 — October 4, 2013*

<i>Born:</i>	July 23, 1917
<i>Parents:</i>	Francis Kelly and Anna (Reinke) Kelly
<i>Postulancy:</i>	September 8, 1933
<i>Novitiate:</i>	August 12, 1934
<i>First Profession:</i>	August 12, 1936
<i>Final Profession:</i>	August 12, 1939
<i>Entered New Life:</i>	October 4, 2013

### **Ministry History**

1936-1937	Teacher: Grades 3 and 4; St. Bernard, Joliet, Illinois
1937-1938	Student: College of St. Francis; Joliet
1938-1943	Teacher: Grade 4; Immaculate Conception, Toledo, Ohio
1943-1954	Teacher: World History, Music, Orchestra; St. Francis Academy, Joliet
1954-1959	Teacher: Music, Glee Club, Choristers, Choir, Civics, U.S. History; St. Peter, Mansfield, Ohio
1959-1966	Teacher and Organist: Music Appreciation, Choir, Glee Club, Music; St. Procop, Cleveland, Ohio
1966-1967	Teacher: Music; St. Raymond, Joliet
1967-1973	Teacher: Music Appreciation, Sophomore Chorus, Private Lessons, Private Music; St. Francis Academy, Joliet
1973-1974	Instructor: Music; St. Francis Academy, Joliet
1974-1976	Instructor: Music; St. Francis Academy, College of St. Francis; Joliet
1976-1977	Organist and Instructor: Holy Family, St. Francis Academy; Joliet
1977-1982	Instructor: Private Music; St. Francis Academy, Joliet
1982-1988	Instructor: Private Music; St. John, Joliet
1988-2003	Instructor: Private Music; Motherhouse, Joliet
2003-2013	Community Service: Our Lady of Angels Retirement Home

<i>Wake:</i>	Wednesday, October 9, 2013, 2:00-6:45 p.m., Our Lady of Angels, Joliet
<i>Prayer Service:</i>	Wednesday, October 9, 2013, 4:45 p.m., Our Lady of Angels, Joliet
<i>Mass of Christian Burial:</i>	Wednesday, October 9, 2013, 7:00 p.m., Our Lady of Angels, Joliet
<i>Burial:</i>	Thursday, October 10, 2013, leaving Our Lady of Angels at 9:00 a.m. to Resurrection Cemetery, Romeoville, Illinois
<i>Interment:</i>	Section 8, Lot 339, Grave 7, Resurrection Cemetery
<i>Predeceased by:</i>	Her parents, Francis Kelly and Anna (Reinke) Kelly and, her brothers John, William and James and sisters, Sister Bernadine Kelly, OSF, Sister Marie Terese Kelly, OSF, Rosamund Kelly, Frances Schwalbach and Josephine Degani.
<i>Survived by:</i>	Her sisters, Rita Johnson of Wilmington, Illinois, Jean Werner of White Bear Lake, Minnesota, and Margaret Abel of Lake Bluff, Illinois, and numerous nieces and nephews

*Rest in Peace, Sister Alcuin*