



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

"I'll Take You Home Again, Kathleen!"

Sister Kathleen Kirk was an Irish Lassie and a musician through and through, and how fitting that the sheet music of this song was in her file. Did she have a premonition that the Lord would be singing this melody to her in the wee hours of April 14, 2014?

Sister Kathleen was born the second daughter of five children to William and Marguerite (Clancy) Kirk on September 29, 1916. Kathleen was baptized one month later on October 29 at her Parish Church, St. Pascal's in Chicago, Illinois, and attended St. Pascal Grade School and Alvernia High School in Chicago. Her connections to St. Pascal Parish remained strong over the years. She became part of the parish staff in 1955 when she was assigned there to teach music and play the organ.

Living during the depression was a challenge for the Kirk family. Her father was the only bread-winner for all seven members of the family, and any special gifts were difficult to obtain. However, Sister Kathleen's love and talent for music became evident in her early years and her parents encouraged her. On the occasion of her 75<sup>th</sup> Jubilee, Sister Kathleen stated that "she was always grateful to be able to pursue a musical career, because her parents made sacrifices to give her and her brother and sisters the opportunity to take piano, violin and dancing lessons in order to enrich their lives."

On September 8, 1932, Sister Kathleen and her older sister, Sister Mary (Vincent) left their parents, brother William and sisters Eleanore and Marguerite to come to Joliet to become postulants in the Sisters of St. Francis of Mary Immaculate. Years later Kathleen would write, "I surely feel rewarded in the fact that my sister Mary and I were Franciscans, my brother Bill studied with the Franciscans, but was ordained for the newly established Joliet Diocese. But my biggest reward was the fact that my Mother and Dad were very active in the 3<sup>rd</sup> Order of Franciscans at St. Peter's in Chicago and Mayslake. We were a real Franciscan family."

Sister Kathleen was able to continue her studies in the fine arts at the College of St. Francis. She received a Bachelor of Arts in 1944 with a major in art and a Bachelor of Music in 1957. In 1965 she presented an organ recital at DePaul University School of Music as part of her requirements for a Master of Music Degree that she received in 1967.

As a young sister, Sister Kathleen became known as a person who was respectful, charitable and upright, qualities that she carried with her into her classroom. She was known to challenge her students as evidenced in an article she wrote to the editors of the Immaculata High School newspaper in 1976 while she was teaching Social Studies. She encouraged the students to look at the Bicentennial celebrations as an opportunity to recall our

# Alleluia!



*Sister Kathleen Kirk, OSF*

heritage, celebrate and demonstrate a concern for human welfare, freedom and positive attitudes toward God and country. She suggested that the students become more concerned with stimulating DOING, as well as THINKING, attributes that Sister Kathleen surely put into practice.

The list of Sister Kathleen's achievements is vast. Other than her one year as a student after first profession, all of Sister Kathleen's degrees and additional coursework for her various ministries were obtained while teaching full time in the parish grade and/or high school, teaching private music lessons after school and serving as the parish organist.

In 1969 Sister Kathleen was invited by one of her grade school classmates who had become a missionary to come to the Philippines to teach music for one year. She taught music at three different places: the University of San Carlos, the girls high school and the boys high school. Some of her biggest challenges were adapting to linguistic differences, sleeping under a mosquito net and adjusting to being 10,000 miles away from home. She said that she looked at life from a different perspective – the year served to intensify her love for her family, friends, Congregation and country.

In 1971 Sister Kathleen was part of a team who taught an anthropology course sponsored by Northwestern University. In 1976 she was selected by the Illinois Bicentennial Commission to help compile a Bicentennial Teacher's Resource Book. In 1981 after forty-five years in the classroom, she moved back to Joliet and started working on other ministries – bookkeeper, volunteer operator for Crisis Line, family ministry and pastoral care ministry.

As her final years of ministry slowed down, you could find Sister Kathleen visiting the residents at Our Lady of Angels. You would notice that she always wore purple. If you commented on her attire, you would receive the response, "I love purple." How fitting it is that she returns to her God during the Lenten Season when the Church celebrates with this liturgical color. Now she is experiencing the Pascal Mystery of the Lord she loved and served so well. Alleluia! Alleluia!

## *Sister Kathleen Kirk, OSF*

*September 29, 1916 — April 14, 2014*

<i>Born:</i>	September 29, 1916
<i>Parents:</i>	William F. Kirk and Marguerite (Clancy) Kirk
<i>Postulancy:</i>	September 8, 1932
<i>Novitiate:</i>	August 12, 1933
<i>First Profession:</i>	August 12, 1935
<i>Final Profession:</i>	August 12, 1938
<i>Entered New Life:</i>	April 14, 2014

### **Ministry History**

1935-1936	Student: St. Francis Preparatory, Joliet, Illinois
1936-1939	Teacher: Grades 1 and 2, St. Mary Magdalene, Columbus, Ohio
1939-1944	Teacher and Assistant Organist: Kindergarten, Grade 2, Music; St. Raymond, Joliet
1944-1945	Teacher, Organist: Kindergarten, Music; Immaculate Conception, Toledo, Ohio
1945-1947	Teacher and Assistant Organist: Music; Sacred Heart-Englewood, Chicago, Illinois
1947-1948	Music Teacher, Organist and Secretary for Catholic High School Music Association: SS. Peter and Paul, Chicago
1948-1950	Music Teacher, Organist and Secretary for Catholic High School Music Association: St. Clement, Chicago
1950-1951	Music Teacher, Organist Supervision: Marybrook Academy, Maumee, Ohio and Music Teacher, Organist: Our Lady of Mercy, Granville, Ohio
1951-1955	Music Teacher, Organist: SS. Peter and Paul, Chicago
1955-1959	Music Teacher, Organist: St. Pascal, Chicago
1959-1960	Music/Organ Teacher, Organist: St. John the Baptist, Joliet
1960-1963	Music Teacher, Organist: Corpus Christi, Columbus, Ohio
1963-1965	Music / Organ Teacher: St. Rita, Aurora, Illinois
1965-1966	Music / Organ Teacher: SS. Peter and Paul, Chicago
1966-1967	Music / Organ Teacher: St. Pius X, Lombard, Illinois
1967-1969	Music / Organ Teacher: St. Raymond, Joliet
1969-1970	Music Teacher: University of San Carlos, Philippines
1970-1971	Music Teacher: St. Procopius High School, Chicago
1971-1980	Teacher: Social Studies; Immaculata, Chicago
1980-1981	General Office Worker: Holy Trinity High School, Chicago
1981-1982	Office Worker: St. Raymond, Joliet
1982-1989	Bookkeeper: St. Raymond, Joliet
1989-1994	Operator: Crisis Line, Joliet
1994-1998	Family Ministry: Motherhouse, Joliet
1998-2006	Pastoral Care: St. Raymond Parish, Joliet
2006-2014	Community Service: Our Lady of Angels, Joliet

<i>Wake:</i>	Wednesday, April 16, 2014, 2:00-6:45 p.m., Our Lady of Angels, Joliet
<i>Prayer Service:</i>	Wednesday, April 16, 2014, 4:45 p.m., Our Lady of Angels, Joliet
<i>Mass of Christian Burial:</i>	Wednesday, April 16, 2014, 7:00 p.m., Our Lady of Angels, Joliet
<i>Burial:</i>	Thursday, April 17, 2014, leaving Our Lady of Angels at 9:00 a.m. to Resurrection Cemetery, Romeoville, Illinois
<i>Interment:</i>	Section 8, Lot 337, Grave 11, Resurrection Cemetery
<i>Predeceased by:</i>	By her parents, William F. Kirk and Marguerite (Clancy) Kirk; her brother Rev. William Kirk; her sisters, Sister Mary (Vincent), Eleanore Cherwin and Marguerite Kirk.
<i>Survived by:</i>	Her nieces and nephews

*Rest in Peace, Sister Kathleen*