



Katherine Tracy, SHCJ
March 1, 1925 – August 25, 2024
Educator, Administrator, Pastoral Care Worker

Rosemont, Pennsylvania – Katherine Tracy, SHCJ, a Sister of the Holy Child Jesus for 79 years, died peacefully on Sunday, August 25, 2024. She was 99.

Sister Katherine demonstrated remarkable perseverance, grace, and zeal during her nearly eight decades as a Holy Child Sister. Sisters Margaret Rogers and Clarita Hanson, who both served with Sister Katherine in Africa, spoke of Sister Katherine’s quiet, loving presence in community and ministry, yet ever eager to meet new people, learn new things, and serve others.

Born in Chicago, Illinois, Sister Katherine was a member of Saint Ignatius Parish, where she was taught by the Sisters of the Holy Child Jesus. After high school, Sister Katherine entered the Society of the Holy Child Jesus and made her final vows in 1950. She became well-known by her religious name Mother Mary Ignatius.



Sister Katherine began her teaching ministry at Holy Spirit School in Sharon Hill, Pennsylvania (1944-48 and 1953-55), and Saint Ignatius School in Chicago, Illinois (1948-53). In 1955, Sister Katherine was missioned to the Society’s African Province where she taught math and English at four Holy Child schools in Nigeria and served as a faculty member at Holy Child College in Ghana. During the Biafran War, she came back to the United States and enrolled in graduate school in Chicago.

In 1971, Sister Katherine returned to Ghana, where she served as principal of the Women’s Training College which later became the Girls’ Secondary School, and was a pioneer in the opening of the near-by Zuarungu Secondary School.

After a total of two decades of serving in the African Province, Sister Katherine returned to the United States where she began coursework in pastoral care. From 1980-85, she ministered in parishes and hospitals in Illinois, Mississippi, and Arkansas. At Mary Holmes Junior College in West Point, Mississippi, she was the campus minister and taught English for five years.

By 1985, Sister Katherine was ready to “slow down.” For her, that meant serving as a nurse’s aide, a librarian, and an assistant in the Holy Child community in Rye, New York. In 1996, her

life came full circle when she returned to Saint Ignatius Parish to serve as a member of the ministry of care team for five years before moving to a women religious retirement community in Hartsdale, New York. In 2015, Sister Katherine moved to Holy Child Center in Rosemont, Pennsylvania.

Throughout her life, Sister Katherine was a prolific writer. She contributed regularly to the Society's publication *Voices* and wrote a short biography of former president of Rosemont College and provincial, Mother Mary Boniface.

Sister Katherine earned a Bachelor of Arts in English from DePaul University in Chicago, Illinois, in 1954, and a Master of Arts in English from Loyola University in Chicago in 1970. She also studied Journalism at Northwestern University.

She joins her parents, Theodore and Honor (nee Higgins), her brother Rev. Theodore Tracy, SJ, and sister, Mary Diffendal (Joseph), in eternal rest. She is survived by nieces, Mary Reap (William), Katherine Tracy, and Jean Haak (Ben), and nephew James Diffendal (Vicki), and many great and grandnieces.

Sister Katherine's Memorial Mass will be held on Friday, September 6, at 11:30 a.m., at Holy Child Chapel, 1341 Montgomery Avenue, Rosemont, Pennsylvania.

In lieu of flowers, memorial donations may be sent to the Society of the Holy Child Jesus – American Province, 1341 Montgomery Avenue, Rosemont, PA 19010, or online at www.shcj.org/american/donate.