Sr. Ita Guthrie, SHCJ

August 1, 1914 – March 5, 2015

**Rosemont, Pennsylvania—**Sr. Ita Guthrie, who was a Sister of the Holy Child Jesus for 78 years, died of cardiac arrest on Friday, March 5, 2015, at Holy Child Center in Rosemont, PA. She was 100.

Sr. Ita was born Nora Guthrie in County Clare, Ireland, to Patrick and Nora (Brew) Guthrie. She was one of nine children and one of two sets of twins in the Guthrie family. Ita had three desires –to be a nurse, to be a sister and to live in Australia. After her schooling in Ireland, she enrolled in a nursing program in London. An eye condition prevented her from continuing in the program. Through an English family, Ita met the Sisters of the Holy Child. She entered the Society of the Holy Child Jesus in Mayfield, England, in 1934, joining her sister, Ann, who had entered six months earlier. A year later, Sr. Ita and Ann, now Sr. Brendan, volunteered to go to America. They set sail for New York on July 25, 1935. That was how Sr. Ita came to celebrate her 21st birthday with a special meal at the captain’s table aboard *The American Trader.*

Sr. Ita and Sr. Brendan made their first vows in 1936 and their final vows in 1941 in Sharon Hill, PA.

Sr. Ita’s first mission was to the convent there, where she served for 11 years. For the next 22 years, she helped take care of the household and kitchen at the Holy Child convent in Portland, OR. Fulfilling her dream to become a nurse became possible when she was missioned to Pasadena, CA, in 1968. After a practical nursing course at Pasadena Adult Training Center, Sr. Ita worked at the Orange Grove Nursing Home. She left Pasadena for Rye, NY, where she was the nurse at the infirmary for ten years. In 1982, Sr. Ita was called on to be the nurse at New Sharon, Rosemont, PA. Five years later, she moved to Our Lady of Lourdes convent, New York City, where she worked until 1996.

Sr. Ita lived to celebrate her 100th birthday at the convent in Rye, NY, last August 1. Her good friend, Fr. Thomas Fenlon, from her years at Our Lady of Lourdes, celebrated the Mass. A great party followed with family and friends from Ireland and the United States. Sr. Ita delighted in the check and the letter she received from the president of Ireland –a standard practice when an Irish person anywhere in the world turns 100.

Although she never fulfilled her dream to go to Australia, Sr. Ita was known for her spirit of gratitude for all the good things in her life. Her kindness, her love for the Society of the Holy Child Jesus and her spirit of prayer were legendary.

She is survived by several nieces and nephews in Ireland.

Friends and family remembered Sr. Ita at a prayer service of remembrance on Thursday, March 12 and at her funeral in the New Sharon Chapel on Friday, March 13. Funeral arrangements were handled by Donohue’s Funeral Home.

In lieu of flowers, memorial donations may be sent to the Society of the Holy Child Jesus at 1341 Montgomery Avenue, Rosemont, PA 19010.

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