



Society of the Holy Child Jesus  
AMERICAN PROVINCE

1341 Montgomery Avenue  
Rosemont, Pennsylvania 19010  
610.626.1400 *phone* / 610.525.2910 *fax*  
[www.shcj.org/american](http://www.shcj.org/american)

**Alice Penrose, SHCJ**  
**February 13, 1926 – October 18, 2018**  
**Educator, Administrator, and Nurse**

Rosemont, Pennsylvania – Alice Penrose, SHCJ, a Sister of the Holy Child Jesus for 71 years, died on October 18, 2018. She was 92.

Sister Alice was a gifted person with a sunny disposition, generous heart, and straightforward approach that enabled her to face many challenges throughout life. Along with these natural gifts was a strong faith nurtured in a warm and loving family.

Born and raised in Philadelphia, Sister Alice attended Most Blessed Sacrament School in Southwest Philadelphia. In 1944, she graduated from West Catholic Girls High School where she was inducted into the Hall of Fame. Impressed by the spirit of the Holy Child Sisters who taught her at West Catholic, Sister Alice, along with two of her classmates, entered the Society of the Holy Child Jesus immediately after high school. She made her first and final vows in 1947 and 1952, respectively. She became well known by her religious name Mother Mary Dermot.



Sister Alice's ministry in education spanned more than three decades beginning at Saint Edward School in Philadelphia (1947-1952) and then continued at Saint Charles School in Portland, OR (1952-1960).

In 1960, Sister Alice's next mission took her to Nigeria, where for ten years she taught at Holy Child Training College in Ifuho. During those years, the Biafran War erupted and forced schools to close. The sound of bombers flying over the area became a daily, frightening experience. While the Holy Child convent was spared, the College was hit, and the Holy Child Sisters were called home. After a terrifying flight, Sister Alice, along with Helen Mulligan, SHCJ, reached Rome, Italy, where they were warmly welcomed.

Beginning in 1970 Sister Alice's next challenge was to open a Holy Child community and build Saint Anne Secondary School in Otukpo, Nigeria. With the help of other Holy Child Sisters, the school was up and running within five years. As the School approaches its 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary, plans are underway to honor Sister Alice for her pioneering work by naming a wing in her name.

In 1975, Sister Alice was happy to return to Philadelphia to be near her aging mother. For a few years, she taught at Holy Child Academy in Drexel Hill and Saint Edward School in Philadelphia, until she learned that nurses were needed at Holy Child Center in Rosemont, PA. In 1981, at age 55, Sister Alice returned to school and earned an Associate's degree and RN at Hahnemann University. She spent five



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years nursing at Holy Child Center and then eight years at Marydale Retirement Village in Newark, DE. She then assumed responsibility for retired Holy Child Sisters living in a retirement community in Haverford, PA. Her next move was to the Sisters' community in Bryn Mawr, PA, where she served as the house treasurer and oversaw the general management of the house. Sister Alice also supported and cared for her good friend, Joan McIntyre, SHCJ, during her battle with ovarian cancer.

In her final years, Sister Alice remained active and engaged with friends and family, and continued her hobby of counted cross-stitching and making personalized gifts for family members' weddings and baptisms.

Sister Alice joins her parents, John and Ada (nee Sealace), and siblings, Jack, Marie Booth, Betty O'Leary, Jerry, and Jimmy. Survived by her sister-in-law, Dottie Penrose, and many nephews and nieces.

In addition to earning her nursing degree at Hahnemann University in 1983, she received a Bachelor of Science in Education from Villanova University in 1952 and a Master of Education from Portland University in Portland, OR, in 1958.

Family and friends are invited to a prayer service of remembrance on Monday, October 29, at 4:00 p.m., and Mass of Christian Burial on Tuesday, October 30, at 11:00 a.m., Holy Child Chapel, 1341 Montgomery Avenue, Rosemont, PA, 19010. Preceding Mass, friends, and family are welcome to attend the wake at 10:00 a.m. Funeral arrangements are handled by O'Leary Funeral Home.

In lieu of flowers, memorial donations may be sent to Society of the Holy Child Jesus – American Province, 1341 Montgomery Avenue, Rosemont, PA 19010, or make a gift online at [www.shcj.org/american/donate](http://www.shcj.org/american/donate).