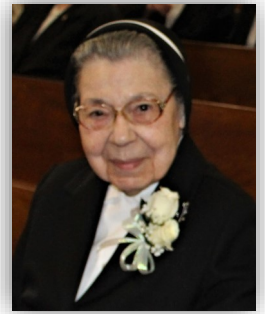




Born to New Life

Sister Catherine Schimizzi, MPF



Sister Catherine Schimizzi, MPF, 92, died unexpectedly on Thursday, May 16, 2019, at Morristown Medical Center, Morristown, New Jersey. Her passing stunned the sisters of the community who were accustomed to her daily presence at Community functions, who visited Saint Joseph Hall daily, and who was ever ready to assist when there were chores that demanded her attention and precision.

Sister Catherine was born and raised in Watkins Glen, New York. She entered the Religious Teachers Filippini in 1939, received her habit in 1943, and made her religious profession in 1946. Sister Catherine was awarded a BS degree in Elementary Education from the College of Saint Elizabeth and an MA from Seton Hall University, South Orange, New Jersey.

Sister Catherine served in elementary education, primarily in the intermediate grades, for forty years in the Archdioceses of Newark, New Jersey and Hartford, Connecticut, and in the Dioceses of Trenton and Camden, New Jersey, Cleveland, Ohio, and Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania. While at Holy Rosary School - Cleveland, Ohio, and Holy Rosary School - Jersey City, New Jersey, she was principal. In many of these assignments, Sister Catherine was also the musician.

Sister Catherine retired at Villa Walsh in 2006. Although retired, she served at Saint Anthony, Belleville, leading the children's choir. At Villa Walsh she was organist whenever needed, utilized her skills as a seamstress, and assisted in small chores that made a huge difference in the eyes of the local community. She will be remembered as someone who loved to serve and remain busy. She utilized her God-given talents in a quiet, humble, yet precise, flawless way.

Because her beloved brother, Father Pat Schimizzi, was a Pallottine Father, Sister Catherine was very devoted to his community. Her wish was fulfilled to have a Pallottine, Father Frank Donio, celebrant at her funeral Mass. In his homily, Father Frank spoke on behalf of the Pallottines, expressing sympathy and recalling how Sister Catherine cared for her brother during his prolonged illness. Other members of her family, whom she cared for, also experienced long suffering.

"How fortunate Sister Catherine was," Father noted, "Sister Catherine lived until the last moment of her life. She loved Christ and lived Christ. No one can separate us from the love of Christ. We are transformed by Christ if we allow this to occur. Religious are called above all to witness the love of God. We go forward in the light of faith and celebrate what is yet to come. This is what we each pray for today."

Sister Alice Ivanyo, in her eloquent tribute, expressed that each of us is a window that allows light to enter that will help us to see and understand God, allows sounds to come through that will help us to hear about God, and allows the current of the Spirit to move through us and among us and help us to sense the presence of God.

"These are some of the ways in which Sister Catherine Schimizzi was a window to God: ...As a young adolescent, she offered her life to God that day. She let us know that God emptied himself and gave his very life so that others may have life, and have it to the full. ... Sister Catherine modeled God's compassion and fidelity to us in times of suffering and need. ... Countless windows of faith and knowledge were opened as she went forth to teach and to share the Word of God. ...Through her perseverance with music and melody, Sister Catherine taught us that God created us to harmonize, to join our voices and our praises together, that we may know how connected we are in his kingdom. ... Sister Catherine's life illustrates for us that our angels and our saints are also working in our very midst and for our benefit, even without our asking. ... Sister Catherine's prayer routine confirms what we know and believe, that every prayer is heard by our loving and attentive God. ... Sister Catherine's passing ends an era of the Schimizzi presence in the Filippini Community, in the Pallottine Community, and in the Church."

In her concluding statements, Sister Alice expressed the many ways Sister Catherine will be missed: *"... I miss hearing the beep-beep of the horn on your scooter. I miss hearing your puns and hearing you laugh out loud at your own jokes... ...You remained joyful until the end. ... In your own words you said that you had lived a good life. How true! You also said that you were tired. How true! And you so bravely said to the doctor that night, we all have to go sometime. How very true! You showed us many things about God, and we will treasure all of them. You left us with a great lesson: God is to be trusted and he is waiting to welcome us as he welcomed you. Rest in his loving arms, dear sister, today and forever. Amen."*