

Born to New Life



Sister Olimpia Picano, MPF

Sister Olimpia Picano, MPF, 95, died peacefully on Friday, December 7, 2019, in the St. Joseph Hall Infirmary at Villa Walsh, Morristown, New Jersey.

Born in Hartford, Connecticut, in 1924, Sister Olimpia entered the Religious Teachers Filippini in 1947. She received the habit in 1948 and made her religious profession in 1951. Sister Olimpia received a Bachelor of Arts degree from Kean College of New Jersey in Early Childhood Education and Certification in Spanish Language Studies from the Catholic University of Puerto Rico; Director of Religious Education from Catholic University in Washington, DC; and Elementary and Nursery School Teacher from New Jersey State Department of Education. Sister Olimpia was the recipient of the Jubilee Medal Pro Meritis for distinguished service in the Archdiocese of Newark, New Jersey.

As 4th grade teacher, Sister Olimpia served in Our Lady of Mt. Carmel School in Orange and St. Francis Xavier School in Newark, New Jersey. She served on mission in Our Lady of Mt. Carmel, Schenectady, New York. After her 50th year of ministry in Immaculate Heart of Mary Nursery in Elizabeth, New Jersey, Sister Olimpia relocated to St. Bartholomew School in Scotch Plains and then to Blessed Sacrament School in Paterson, New Jersey where she continued to instruct small groups of children. Following her years of active ministry in education, Sister Olimpia served the community in Villa Walsh, Motherhouse for several years before retiring to St. Joseph Hall Infirmary in 2017.

In his homily Benedictine Father Hilary O'Leary aptly described the legacy of Sister Olimpia: *"All through her life since she was a young woman and met the sisters of this community, Sister Olimpia listened to the voice of Jesus and followed Him where He led her and she has now followed Him in her passage into new life. Certainly God has spoken through her dedicated life of prayer, stability, industry and fidelity. Sister Olimpia knew, as the Gospel reminds us, that Jesus is the key to the meaning of our existence, to the wisdom needed if we are truly life-giving, to the healing and forgiveness of God that we all need, to the service of one another... We give praise to God for Sister's long and good life and the lessons that we have learned from her about living well and dying well."*

After recalling fond memories in her heartwarming eulogy, Sister Josephine Galasso concluded by saying, *"Today we are gathered in this holy place to celebrate the life of a Sister so loved by God, who lived her ministry of teaching the Christian faith to the young in the Spirit of St. Lucy Filippini. May we, in Sister Olimpia's style, walk in her gentle footsteps, keeping our eyes on the Blessed Mother and always be grateful for the blessings of God in our daily lives. May we also have the grace to live the words she personified, 'My spirit rejoices in God my Savior.'"*