



## Born to New Life

### Sister Elizabeth Arcangeli, MPF



Sr. Elizabeth Arcangeli, MPF, 97, (two weeks away from her 98<sup>th</sup> birthday), died peacefully on Wednesday, November 14, 2018, at St. Joseph Hall.

*“Jesus Christ is the same yesterday, today, and forever.” (Heb 13:8) This was the introduction to celebrant, Msgr. Thomas Gervasio’s homily at Sr. Elizabeth’s Mass of Resurrection. Msgr. invited the assembly to look with him in three directions “- to yesterday in thanksgiving: We look back with gratitude for the many good gifts the Lord bestowed on Sr. Elizabeth... To the present in petition: We gather to pray for Sr. Elizabeth and the happy repose of her soul... We look into eternity: We look to Jesus, forever in heaven, and into eternity with hope... We must allow our celebration of this Mass, this heaven come to earth, to change us and turn us to the Lord and prepare us for heaven to enjoy that perfect union with God and to see Sr. Elizabeth and all our loved ones again and with them to rejoice in the communion of saints.”*

Sr. Elizabeth was born and raised in Watkins Glen, New York. In 1937, she entered the Religious Teachers Filippini. She received her religious habit in 1938, and made her final religious profession in 1941. Sr. Elizabeth held three degrees: A major in French with a minor in English, St. Elizabeth College, Convent Station; Master Degree in English, Seton Hall University; major in Religious Education, Fordham University.

Sr. Elizabeth was a well-respected and revered teacher. Throughout her entire life she took great pride in this profession. She taught Junior High and High School throughout most of her teaching career. Her teaching career was interrupted from 1974-84 where she served as a caregiver for her parents in Watkins Glen, New York. At the same time, she became involved in Religious Education at the local parish, St. Mary’s of the Lake, Watkins Glen.

Upon her return to New Jersey, Sr. Elizabeth ministered in Adult Education and as the Coordinator for Religious Education. No matter her role, the *teacher* in her always surfaced and triumphed. In 2008, Sr. Elizabeth retired at Villa Walsh, and in 2015 she became a resident at St. Joseph Hall. During these years of retirement and even while at St. Joseph Hall, Sister continued to teach Scripture classes to the sisters in the Home Health Care Center.

Sr. Ascenza began her tribute to Sr. Elizabeth by confirming that Sr. Elizabeth was all about life and that she lived life to the fullest. Both Msgr. Gervasio and Sr. Ascenza noted how her life story was so intertwined with Bishop Walsh who vacationed in her hometown at Watkins Glen for many summers, and often visited the Arcangeli home. Bishop Walsh and Mother Ninetta acted together to foster her vocation as well as her two sisters’ vocations, Sr. Ernestine and Sr. Josephine.

*Gifted as a great story teller and prolific writer, Sr. Elizabeth had the ability to stir the depth of the hearts of her listeners when she spoke. There are numerous ways that Sr. Elizabeth could be remembered to you today. I could remind you of her love for her sisters in community, her joy in giving; offer examples of her inquisitive mind, tell of her ability to be creative, her desire to keep learning; her organizational skills and these are only a few from a much longer list. But those of you who knew her, learned from her, who participated in her scripture classes, you know that she would most want to be remembered as ‘Teacher’ especially ‘Teacher of the Word.’ The Word was so alive in her. Sr. Elizabeth embodied our charism, ‘Go teach the Word of God.’ This was her passion.”*

Sr. Ascenza ended her eulogy by sharing a letter Sr. Elizabeth wrote to the community just prior to her return from caring for her parents. The letter ended with a quote from Isaiah to the exiles, and I am sure this is the message she wants to share with us today: *“Yes, in joy shall you depart, in peace you shall be brought back. Mountains and hills shall break out in song before you, and all the trees of the forest shall clap their hands.”*  
*Sisters, rejoice with me, I am going home.*

*Expectantly, Elizabeth*