

**SISTER AGNES TERESA MC LANE**  
**April 14, 1909 – October 23, 2006**

Tonight we gather to celebrate the gift of Sister Agnes Teresa to the Sisters of Charity of Seton Hill. We remember her smiling Irish eyes, her happy sayings, and her wonderful gift of music as we join in song and prayer for her entrance into the life where joy, music and peace last eternally.

Teresa McLane was born on April 14, 1909, the youngest of seven children of Brigid Cawley and John McLane. She was baptized on April 28, 1909, in Saint Patrick's Church, Archbald, Pa.. Today only her sister Margaret (now Sister Mary Basil of the Immaculate Heart of Mary Sisters in Scranton) survives. Her parents and brothers Joseph and John and her sisters Agnes, Mary McLane Lally, and Elizabeth (Sister DeNeri of the Immaculate Heart Sisters) preceded her in death.



Teresa attended public elementary and high school. Even as a small child she demonstrated an innate ability and interest in music. She played the piano by ear and was most successful. An aunt, Sister Mary Martin of the Immaculate Heart Sisters and her mother's sister, recognized this talent and insisted that she learn to play the piano while reading notes. She did this as a teenager, but was always happy to play any tune without any music.

Her two older sisters, Elizabeth and Margaret, attended Marywood College and joined their aunt as Sisters of the Immaculate Heart. However, Teresa decided to attend Seton Hill College and graduated in 1931, with a major in Latin and English and a minor in music. She was a classmate of Sister Helen Hart and also was president of the Student Government Association.

Teresa must have felt most at home at Seton Hill, because when God called her to religious life she entered the Sisters of Charity on September 8, 1933. After a brief teaching assignment at Saint John the Baptist School, Sister Agnes Teresa attended nursing school at Pittsburgh Hospital, received her diploma and became a registered nurse in 1941.

Sister Agnes Teresa brought to nursing a rich combination of healing presence, laughter, and music as she ministered to caregivers as gently and earnestly as she did to patients. When serving as the proctor for nursing students from Pittsburgh Hospital, she was described by one student as "having discipline with a gentle touch." "We were so homesick, then you, dear Sister Agnes Teresa, would gather us around the piano and we would sing all those good old songs. Before long we were all feeling better and off to bed we would go."

Always described by students, patients, and her sisters as kind, gentle, a free spirit with a great sense of humor, Sister Agnes Teresa exuded joy and merriment. She wrote as she prepared for vows, "As I glance back over the peace and happiness of the past five years, I realize how grateful I ought to be for the grace of my vocation. Never would I have experienced such peace if God had not called me to be a Sister. May I have your permission, Mother, to continue my life in the community? I shall try to do my best in prayer, in work, in everything."

Sister Agnes Teresa carried out this promise serving at Pittsburgh and Providence Hospitals, the House of Mary and as nurse at the summer camp at Marymount. Perhaps, the light of her life and her greatest happiness was found at DePaul where she served as school nurse for 25 years. Healing the small cuts and bruises, the tummy aches, and sore throats was just a small part of her gift to the children and staff. Greater still was the recognition of the need for an extra bit of attention, a caring voice, a twinkling smile and a magic potion of water and hugs which cured small hurts and homesick hearts.

A convent where Sister Agnes Teresa lived was one of music and laughter. Murph, as she called everyone, and everyone called her, brought her Irish wit, her love of music, and her contagious love of life." On January 9, 1977, during the Community Day Talent Show, Sister Agnes Teresa tickled the ivories on stage to "Golden Oldies." Then as she moved into waltzes and polkas, a number of sisters got up to dance. I recall Sister Theresa Clare gliding across the floor as sisters clapped and kept time to the music.

Even as her infirmities progressed and she could no longer participate as she always had, her feet and hands would keep time with the music playing in her room and her smile was always evident. People loved to visit because she was so pleasant and in response to the smallest favor done by Sister Francis Louise or her loving nieces and Sister Mary Basil when they visited, she would respond with "Now that's more better."

Unfortunately, there is one goal which Murph hoped to accomplish which she was unable to meet. Always an ardent Pirate fan, much to the chagrin of her nieces, Margaret and Clare, who rooted for the Mets, she really hoped one day to play the organ for the ball game. ***Da da da da da daaaa. Charge.*** Or "Take Me Out To The Ball Game." She really loved her Pirates and followed their progress as she listened to every game.

Sister Agnes Teresa, we will miss your smiling Irish eyes and laughter. Thank you for keeping your promise so faithfully. I believe, we your sisters, can say, "You have tried and done your best in **prayer** and **work** and **everything**." May you enjoy the music of eternity with the God you served so well.

*Funeral Liturgy Reflections  
Sister Louise Grundish  
October 25, 2006*