

**SISTER M. ROSALINE WALSH**  
**February 16, 1917 – January 9, 2005**

Good evening. I am humbled to speak to you about Sister Rosaline Walsh, one of our unique, interesting, and beloved sisters. I hope I can do justice to this woman whose friends are legion and whose family dearly loved her and held her in such esteem.

As the Feast of the Baptism of our Lord dawned, Sister Rosaline was peacefully surrendering her life to the God she knew so well. How fitting that she should die on the day that each of us is reminded of our Baptism into Christ and our hope for eternal life with God. Sister Rosaline had been waiting for this day. Her last few years were years of struggle because of her failing health and inability to do the many things she liked to do.

She could well pray with Saint Elizabeth Ann Seton as poetically written in the Cantata by Sister Mary Schmidt :

“ Now gathers in the dark and I am wearied out, so long the day.  
O dear eternity, dear end of pilgriming at last I pray.  
Show me the Vesper star, the rising moon to brighten soon the way.”

Sister Rosaline once said to a friend, “ My life is an open book.” I suppose if we were to look at statistics it was that. She was born in Indianapolis, Indiana, the fourth of five children. She was the third daughter. Her father, who came from County Mayo in Ireland, was a baker and her mother, Theresa Fallon, was born in Pittsburgh. A few years later, the family was complete with another daughter, Peggy, who is with us tonight. Her father baked all his life and those who were friends of Sister Rosaline remember the wonderful smells of baking and cinnamon in their home on Euclid Avenue.

Rosaline was born in Indiana, but she was raised in Pittsburgh’s East Liberty section where she attended Sacred Heart grade and high school. She was always proud to be from Father Coakley’s parish.

Described by family as one who blazed new trails, she walked through life in her way. Her mother instilled the work ethic early in Rosaline, her brother and sisters. Rosaline fulfilled her tasks with alacrity and then was off to other ventures. Her two important family functions were food shopping daily and scrubbing the kitchen floor. Because she was the shopper she was permitted to buy herself an éclair or a lady lock each day. This special treat was for her alone.

She made dating a bit easier for Peggy because she announced to her mother that if someone called her for a date or a movie, she was not going to get off the phone to ask permission as her older sisters did. She would accept and go. She also taught Peggy that it was good to say that the person was someone’s brother, sister, son, or daughter. This statement seemed to assure that the person in question was reliable.

Rosaline had many friends and she and Sister Mary Janet Ryan shared many good times together as they went through school.

As Rosaline was finishing high school, her mother was concerned about her work ethic. An Avon woman came to the house to sell her products and described how it was important to sell as many items as possible so as to receive greater commissions. Mrs. Walsh decided that Rosaline would be an “Avon Lady” and purchased the kit. Peggy asked her mother if she had asked Rosaline about her plan. Of course, she said she hadn’t, but suggested that Rosaline had to do something. When Mrs. Walsh presented the kit to Rosaline, she cried that she did not want to be an Avon lady, she wanted to be a Sister of Charity. That announcement was the first time the family realized that Rosaline had this idea in mind. Therefore, from June to September, everyone helped her gather the necessary items to enter on September 8, 1935.

Her journey as a Sister of Charity was interesting and varied. She spent 19 years at The DePaul School for Hearing and Speech where she loved the children and because she was a most attractive sister, she was often the sister pictured on many of the The DePaul School for Hearing and Speech brochures. It was here that a lifelong and deep friendship with Sister Mary McClory began and blossomed.

After 19 years at The DePaul School for Hearing and Speech, she went to teach 8<sup>th</sup> grade at Sacred Heart. Imagine the culture shock as she left a classroom of 5 or 6 to one of 40 or 50 students. But she went on to be a successful teacher and principal in many of our schools. When her days in school were complete, she worked in Parish Ministry and later as co-manager of a large high rise. At the high rise, she also served as Treasurer. When she left the high rise, she moved to Elizabeth Seton and served as a Receptionist at Seton Center. No job was too small or too large. A list of her assignments can be found in her obituary. I feel sure her mother is congratulating her on her work ethic.

Who was this woman whose life was an open book. Her life was an open book with many chapters. Some here remember her as devout, prayerful, and deeply dedicated to the rosary. Some remember her as quiet with a ready smile. Some describe her love of order and perfection. Some remember her happiness, her Irish humor, her ability to remember and tell a new joke. Some remember her as always seeing the humor in every day events, people, and things. She loved to laugh. She loved to travel, to have and go to parties, and being involved with people. She loved animals and they knew it. Brigid and Mitzi were two of her favorites. Mitzi knew when Aunt Rose was around that many handouts and treats were a sure thing. In fact, she was so attached to Aunt Rose that when Kathleen made the turn at the golf course to come to Caritas, she began to demonstrate her excitement in the car until they arrived at the door. Rosaline was artistic and a seamstress. If she didn't know how to do something, she worked at it and taught herself to do it. When she saw something that needed done, she did it. Rosaline loved her family and friends and enjoyed thoroughly time spent with them. All remember Rosaline as a free spirit with a mind of her own.

Finally, the part of Rosaline that only those who lived with her or were her special friends know well was her ability to bring beauty to the part of the world in which she found herself. As the convent at Our Lady of Perpetual Help in Scottsdale was being constructed, her input added so many beautiful and useful touches. A particularly special stained glass window in the chapel was designed by her and dedicated to her parents. Many of our Korean Card Party table prizes were the result of her imagination, skill, and artistry. Some participants are still using the lovely Santa heads she made many years ago. Sister friends remember her sitting up almost all night to complete a banner or artistic rendering. However, if it was not perfect it was destroyed. Only the best was displayed. She taught herself to make a trapunta. This wall hanging of sewing and stuffing with cotton now hangs in the foyer of St. Thomas More High Rise.

Sister Mary Jean Petrarca said that as she went through Seton Center and Elizabeth Seton convent the day after Rosaline died, she was struck by the many beautiful things she left as her legacy of love.

As we remember Rosaline's life, let us be grateful for her example of love, friendship, and beauty and know that the God that she loved and served has prepared the eternal banquet for this daughter of Elizabeth Seton. Dear Rosaline, help us to remember to laugh, love, and see beauty about us.

“Rosaline, ‘in your Jerusalem, the shining gates are welcoming above.’ You have found your Nazareth, your peace. It echos soon and sweet in Paradise.”

(Paraphrased from the Cantata)