

Sister Anne Claytor

Entered eternal life on August 2, 2016



I first met Sister Anne Claytor when Anne came to live with us at Bayley-Ellard Convent. A few years later I lived with her in Morristown when we both worked at the College of Saint Elizabeth. We also worked together in the congregation Office of Ministry Services.

Sister Anne Claytor, Sister Constance, Connie, Anna Mae, Aunt Mae was born on October 29, 1925 in Shelby, Ohio, to Lester and Constance Claytor. Anne had three beloved brothers, Jack, Bob and Joe; and one wonderful sister Mary. She is survived by two special sisters-in-law, Rose and Dolores Claytor; her nephews: John Claytor, Martin Claytor, and David Reynolds and nieces: Pamela Rajpal, Deborah Giardina, Dolores Pizzolato, Katy Frazina, Mary Bigelow, Linda Philips and Joan Marie Hutzley.

After her family moved to New Jersey, Anne entered the Sisters of Charity Prep School. She entered the Sisters of Charity on Sept 8, 1944 and never looked back, sharing her gifts as a Sister of Charity for 71 years. I say never looked back because Anne was always looking forward and planning well in advance of any event or activity. She planned meticulously for everything from ingredients for a recipe to lesson plans and weeks in advance for vacation details. No detail slipped by. In her life, everything had a place and everything better be in its place. Anne was well ahead of the *Get Organized and Simplify Your Lives* movements of today. Anne had her schedule set for each day and her prayers came first, then her exercises, then her breakfast and finally the clothes she had decided last week to wear that day.

Anne used these talents as a Sister of Charity and an educator. Anne had a BA from the College of Saint Elizabeth in Elementary Education; an MA from Seton Hall University in Elementary Education; and ED.D from Rutgers University in Curriculum Theory and Development.

Her skills in planning supported all her classroom and educational ministries. Anne used her love for education and young people as a teacher at six catholic schools; as an elementary principal at Our Lady of Sorrows, South Orange and St. Mary's in the Trenton Diocese; as college professor at the College of Saint Elizabeth and Fairleigh Dickinson University; as Assistant Superintendent of Schools in Miami and Paterson and in ministry services for the Sisters of Charity.

Anne's last parish mission was at St. Francis School, Ridgefield Park, until 2010. She then moved to Convent Station and volunteered at the Academy of St. Elizabeth. She "officially" retired in 2012 at the early age of 89. Anne's talents were shared freely with students and teachers alike.

Anne was at heart an educator, but she had a lighter side and you could tell this by the chuckles which filled her conversations. She shared many happy occasions with her beloved family and friends, including her longtime friend, Sister Mary Elizabeth Dacey. She loved going anywhere and everywhere on vacation, especially with Sister Mary Xavier and Sister Maureen Christopher.

Anne's attention to detail came out in other ways. She was a good cook ...if she had a good recipe. She was a marvelous seamstress and made many of her own clothes for years. Anne loved to be well dressed and everything had to match. She shared this gift for sewing by sewing for other sisters and making gifts for family and friends.

Her attention to detail and precision was shared by one of the sisters who lived with Anne in St. Mary's Elizabeth, a house of 25 sisters. Anne had the job of washing, starching and fluting the religious caps worn by each sister. It was a hot and tedious job, but Anne did it well without complaining.

In later years, Anne took up watercolor and printed her own cards which many of us have received. I always knew that Advent had arrived when my first Christmas card always came from Anne.

We have talked about Anne's service as an educator and her other gifts, but the source of all that she did was rooted in her faith. She believed deeply that God, not Anne, was really in charge. She often encouraged others by sharing her trust in God. As her health began to fail and her neck didn't hold her head up high any more, Anne continued to persevere knowing that her work for God was not yet finished. She did what she could and continued to always keep things in good order.

When I visited her, during this last month, I found that the hospice women were amazed at how neat she still kept her drawers. Anne could direct them to find anything she wanted.

When her time to go was nearing, some sisters said, "Anne, it is OK to go home to God now". Anne would often reply – "Not Yet". I know that when Anne got the invitation from God to come home NOW, she responded with joy. I want to offer our special "Thank You" to the sisters and staff at the Motherhouse who have been so supportive, faithful and caring to Anne in so many ways, especially in these last few months.

We want to thank the Atlantic Health Care staff for their gentleness and constant care. We especially want to share our condolences, but also our "Thanks" to Anne's family, first for sharing her with us all these years and, especially, for their faithfulness and constancy to Anne in these last few months. (The sisters also enjoyed the wonderful bakery goods you her nephew, Johnny, made and shared with them.)

Thank you, Anne for all you have done as a Sister of Charity for students, teachers, family, friends and especially your service to the ministry of education.

I pray that you find heaven well organized and that you can enjoy your well-deserved heavenly home. God bless you, Anne.

Sister Maureen Sullivan