

SISTER THOMAS AQUINAS REGAN

Entered eternal life on June 2, 2016



Margaret, later known as Sister Thomas Aquinas Regan, was born in Boston, MA, and lived in the Uphams Corner area of Dorchester. It is she who brings us together this evening. We come before the Lord—in praise, sorrow and joy, and gratitude for the life of Sister Thomas. She brought to each of us comfort in time of sadness, support in time of discouragement and that spontaneous smile whenever we were happy or achieved. This afternoon, we shared many of these times.

She was daughter to Thomas and Bridget Foley Regan and sister to Thomas and John, all who have gone home to God. Here with us are Joseph or Joe, her brother and Mary, the closest of all, her twin. Many nieces and nephews and their children are represented by Mary Margaret and her very dearest friend, Paula, Patty and Her family. Distance, health and other responsibilities make the whole family present spiritually with us.

Bridget carried two beautiful babies in her womb for nine months—can you imagine the pride when they were baptized? How precious they were as little children going to school—growing to young adulthood—and choosing to follow Jesus as Sisters of Charity of St. Elizabeth. How heavy the hearts of Mr. and Mrs. Regan, and yet filled with pride as their daughters left South Station for NJ. Being twins could have made them cling to one another, but no, they completed one another just as complementary angles in Math. Margaret gave herself to studies at the College of St. Elizabeth and began her teaching career at St. Bridget's, Jersey City. After a very successful time there she came to Blessed Sacrament, Jamaica Plain. There some of her students were as tall as she but they knew and loved her as she was mother, educator and mentor to all. During that time she also studied at Boston College and enriched her classes with the latest in educational theory. It was during this time I had the happy opportunity of living with her. She always managed to prepare her school work and her studies and then went home to have a “cup of tea” with Bridgie. When the early morning call came to go to St. Patrick's, Sister Thomas gave another full hearted, if broken for a few minutes, “Yes” to Community and to God. In her heart she trusted that Providence would provide and indeed it did. Joe was there for Bridgie. Mary came many months later. I must add that Sister Thomas lived her faith and commitment by the three words “God is good.”

She kept her religious name when most did not. She continued to wear the veil as public symbol of this commitment—showing that the woman of post Vatican II was both always in the present and rooted in a rich tradition. She advocated for Catholic Schools in NJ as an active principal and when she returned to Boston sought the advice of the Archdiocese on where she was most needed. St. Jerome's School in Weymouth, south of Boston, was a relatively new school and in need a strong leadership. Sister Thomas stepped in and did a fine job.

As possible, Sister, remained close to her family, the other “Boston Sisters” and to the trends in education. Age, closing of schools and other factors brought the twin-sisters together after almost 50 years of separation in St. Joseph's Parish, Quincy, MA.

Thomas, in true Sister of Charity style, further developed the library into a true center of learning and worked with all the students in developing good reading skills and the tools of research appropriate to their age level. Just as important she lived her love of God and love and respect for all peoples. Her breadth of experience and people skills brought healing and love within many families.

When the convent closed, Mary and Sister Thomas, Margaret, moved into an apartment right across the street from St. John's Church also in Quincy. They were confidant, friend, helper, extraordinary minister of the

Eucharist, Nursing Home visitor, shopper and example to their neighbors. I never saw competition or arrogance between them—always a beautiful connection of respect and complementarity. Mary helped Margaret and Margaret helped Mary. They disagreed agreeably. They laughed and consoled each other.

Mary, just as your parents gave you to the Community—your parents gained the community family. I pledge for all of us: You have given Margaret back to God; please know we give ourselves to you.

In closing, “God is good” “What more could we ask for?”

Sister Mary Pauline Hogan