

## Sister John Mary Tierney, SC

Sister John Mary Tierney (99), a devoted Sister of Charity of Saint Elizabeth, died peacefully on February 20, 2025, at St. Catherine of Siena Health Care Facility, Caldwell, New Jersey. Sister John Mary was born in Orange, New Jersey, the daughter of John and Louise (Lana) Tierney. She entered the Sisters of Charity on March 25, 1948, and was a devoted member for 76 years.

With a deep sense of purpose, Sister John Mary earned a B.A. in Education from the College of Saint Elizabeth, Convent Station, New Jersey and an M.A. in Educational Psychology from Jersey City State College, Jersey City, New Jersey. She also received her certification in Library Science from Trenton State College, Trenton, New Jersey. Over the years, she served in numerous educational roles in New Jersey, shaping generations of young learners.

She began her teaching career at the Academy of St. Aloysius in Jersey City and St. James School in Newark before becoming a teacher, counselor, and vice-principal at St. Paul of the Cross School in Jersey City. Her leadership extended as principal of Sacred Heart Elementary School in Jersey City, where she guided the school community with wisdom and grace. Later, she served as a school psychologist at St. Anne and A.H. Moore schools in Jersey City, offering guidance and support to students in need. Sr. John Mary also taught religion and psychology at St. Mary High School in Jersey City, where she additionally served as a counselor, helping students navigate their academic and personal journeys. Later in her career, she returned to her alma mater, Immaculate Conception High School in Montclair, as the school librarian, continuing her lifelong love of learning and education.

Her passion for music was a cherished gift she shared with others by performing in and directing choirs and assisting with school musicals, fostering creativity and spiritual expression in those she mentored. She loved spending her summers volunteering at Maris Stella, the Sisters of Charity Retreat House on Long Beach Island offering hospitality and care to those seeking rest and renewal and where she would also be found playing the organ and singing in the chapel.

Even in retirement, Sr. John Mary remained dedicated to a life of service. She continued her work as a librarian, volunteered as a driver for the Mother House and took on the heartfelt responsibility of updating the prayer board, and ensuring that the names of those in need of special prayers were never forgotten.

Beyond her professional and religious commitments, Sr. John Mary cherished her family and remained a constant source of love and encouragement to them. She was deeply devoted to her lifelong friends and colleagues, treasuring the relationships she built over the decades. Special recognition must be given to her beloved brother-in-law, Jack, whose kindness, support, and steadfast presence in her life were a true blessing. Throughout her life, Psalm 23 was a guiding light. *"The Lord is my shepherd; I shall not want..."* These words sustained her through times of joy and challenge, reflecting her deep faith and devotion. Sr. John Mary's legacy is one of unwavering faith, kindness, and dedication. She inspired generations through her teaching, counseling, leadership, and music leaving an indelible mark on all who had the privilege of knowing her. She will be fondly remembered for her lifelong commitment to education, service, music, and the love she shared with so many.

Sister John Mary was predeceased by her parents, her sisters Patricia Reynolds and Virginia Cebello, her brother-in-law Frank Cebello and niece Jo Ann Cebello. She is survived by the Sisters of Charity Community, her brother-in-law John J. "Jack" Reynolds, her nephews John Reynolds (Andrea), Frank Cebello, Andrew Cebello and John Cebello (Chandra) and loving grandnephew, grandnieces, and countless cousins and friends.

The wake for Sister John Mary will be held at Holy Family Chapel, Convent Station, New Jersey on Monday, March 3, 2025, from 9:30 to 11:00 AM followed by a Mass of Christian Burial at 11:00 AM. Burial in Holy Family Cemetery, Convent Station, will immediately follow the Mass. Funeral arrangements are under the direction of Stephen J. Priola Parsippany Funeral Service, Lake Hiawatha, New Jersey. The Mass will be livestreamed.

In lieu of flowers, donations to the Sisters of Charity Development Fund, P.O. Box 476, Convent Station, NJ, 07961-0476, would be appreciated.

