



SISTERS OF ST. FRANCIS

PO BOX 100 OLDENBURG, IN 47036
WWW.OLDENBURGFRAUCISCANS.ORG



S. KATHYRN (KATE) HOLOHAN

March 27, 2025

Dear Sisters, Associates, Co-workers, Family and Friends,

On March 26 at 5:30 a.m., Sister Kate Holohan danced her way to heaven.

How does one put into words a life lived to the fullest? Kate Holohan was born February 24, 1933, to Anna and John Holohan in Streator, IL. She was the eighth child, but the family eventually increased to 16 children.

Kate writes that she grew up in a beautifully rich family life, which nourished the seed of her vocation. She states that her mom was untiring in her love and service for others. This was shown for her family as well as being available for the work of the church and for the beggars who came to the door. This was done she says, "from their sometimes-meager existence." Kate goes on to say, "She very clearly made it known how important it was to do God's will in this world."

When she speaks of her father, she refers to him as a true Irishman who added a beautiful element to their Catholic home life. Her father taught them that the best things in life are free like walking in the woods, gathering walnuts and violets, summer evenings sleeping out under the stars, a family song fest, and dancing in the living room "till mom thought we would end up in the basement."

Kate wrote that her family life provided the Lord's seeds to be planted in fertile ground and that's the reason the "three Holohans" were able to give a "yes" to their Franciscan life.

She also acknowledges the spirit of sacrifice from her brothers and her sisters in their call to religious life and then their call to serve as missionaries in Papua New Guinea, 12,000 miles from the family.

Kate's first appointment in religious life was to work in our infirmary where she gave much loving care and joy to our sick sisters. Then about 5 years later the Community asked for volunteers to go to Papua New Guinea. She stated, "It was a dream come true when I was selected from the large number of volunteers along with three other sisters to begin our teaching mission in Mendi, the Southern Highlands of Papua New Guinea. I made final vows in August 1960 and left for PNG in September."

She spent the first 14 years in New Guinea mainly in the education field. Then on January 6, 1976, Kate became the directress of the Franciscan Sisters of Mary congregation. This congregation now has their own leadership and chapters. On January 6, 2026, the Franciscan Sisters of Mary will celebrate their 50th anniversary, and on the same day and year our congregation will celebrate our 175th anniversary. In 1982 Kate was elected as a member of our General Council. Four years later she was elected as the Congregational Minister which she held for 8 years.

After serving on the General Council, she spent her time in 2 rural parishes in “Wild and Wonderful West Virginia”. Kate especially enjoyed the second parish as the pastor of that parish was a Capuchin that she had ministered with in Papua New Guinea and had been friends with for over forty years.

In Kate’s last few hours on this earth, many fun stories were told about how she approached life. Those of you reading this letter could add many more tales about her adventures. Some may talk about the ministries she was involved in throughout her lifetime as her legacy. However, as a member of the Holohan family and the Sisters of St. Francis, Oldenburg, most will remember how she lived out her ministries. Her friend, Sr. Joan Laughlin, in writing a recommendation for Kate to be part of the Mercy Center sabbatical program, ended her letter with the following sentence, “I think you will enjoy the wit and wisdom of this fine, faith-filled woman.” Now, that’s a life well lived!

We express sympathy to her family, especially her brother, Jerry and his wife, Alta, her New Guinea Sisters, her classmates, her many friends, and to our nursing and pastoral care staff in St. Clare Hall who gently and kindly attended to Kate.

In grateful memory,



Sister Maggie Rahe
For the Leadership Team

SISTER KATHYRN HOLOHAN (formerly S. Annata)

Birth: February 24, 1933

Entrance into Religious Life: September 6, 1954

Entrance into Eternal Life: March 26, 2025

MISSIONS AT WHICH S. KATHYRN HOLOHAN SERVED:

1958-1960	Motherhouse, Oldenburg IN	1994-1996	Sabbatical
1960-1965	Tari, New Guinea	1996-2005	Christ our Hope, Harrisville WV
1965-1969	Kagua, New Guinea		St. John’s/St Mary’s, WV
1969-1976	Mendi, New Guinea	2005-2009	St. Ann, Clendenon WV
1976-1982	Kagua, New Guinea	2009-2010	Sabbatical
1982-1986	Counselor, Oldenburg IN	2010-2025	Motherhouse, Oldenburg IN
1986-1994	Congregational Minister, Oldenburg IN		

Funeral arrangements have been entrusted to Weigel Funeral Home – visit their website to view Sister’s online memorial, and if desired, an online condolence may be left on the site to share with her family and the Franciscan Sisters – www.Weigelfh.com

Memorial Donations in Sister’s memory may be given online at www.OldenburgFranciscans.org