

***Remembering
Sister Mary Ann Melenchuk
1921 - 2024***



*“our oneness in Christ extends
beyond this life,
the bond of community
unites us even after death”
(Const. #59/d.31)*

Sister Mary Ann Melenchuk completed her earthly journey on March 26, 2024, in the 103rd year of her life. She was born in Saskatchewan, the daughter of Nicholas and Mary, and sister of Edward, Irene, Jean and seven stepbrothers and sisters. A dedicated educator, she taught for seven years before entering the Ursuline Sisters in Vibank in 1950. She continued to be involved in the teaching ministry until 1981, working in Ontario, Saskatchewan and Alberta. Following her retirement from teaching she continued her ministry as a pastoral worker, spending many years working in remote areas where she shared her compassion, her faith and her music.

During her years in pastoral ministry, Sr. Mary Ann often lived a distance from her Ursuline Sisters and she considered the people with whom and to whom she ministered to be her community. In her autobiographical account, she stated that her greatest joy was accompanying those who were dying and their family members. When she moved to Chatham in 1997 she continued to accompany seniors and was a frequent visitor to senior residences in the area as well as in her Ursuline residence.

Sr. Mary Ann's life was celebrated at St. Angela's Meadow Retirement Lodge on April 1st. The prayer service, which Mary Ann had prepared, was led by Sr. Sheila McKinley.

Friends and family were able to be present by zoom and Mary Ann's niece, Janet, shared her memories through an email sent in advance and read by Sr. Theresa Mahoney. Mary Ann chose the theme of Light as the focus of the prayer. The prayers referred to both the light of Christ and our call to be children of the light. The readings were proclaimed by Sisters Kathleen O'Mara, Theresa Campeau and Theresa Mahoney and Sr. Diane Sloan led the prayers of intercession.

One of the special gifts that Mary Ann shared was her gift for music – both sharing it and enjoying her. She played and sang both in her visits to others and in her relaxing time with her sisters. In her memory, at the close of the prayer, the music ministers, Cindy Waddick and Sister Liz Lynch led the group in an enthusiastic rendition of “You are My Sunshine”, one of Mary Ann's favourite songs.

On April 2, the Mass of Resurrection was celebrated with Father Clare Coleman as presider and homilist. Sr. Pauline Maheux welcomed the group, both those present in the kiva and those joining the service through zoom. The readings were proclaimed by Sisters Joan Stafford, Noreen Allossery-Walsh and Fr. Coleman. Sr. Eleanor Gleeson led the Prayers of the Faithful. In his homily, Fr. Clare reflected on the Easter appearances of the Risen Christ and necessity of faith for the disciples then, and today, in order to

recognize the presence of Christ. Ryan Nauta and Sr. Liz were the music ministers.

The prayers of committal were led by Sr. Marian Krauskopf and the crucifix from Sr. Mary Ann's casket will be sent to her relatives in Saskatchewan to remind them of the ongoing connection that is shared. We rejoice with our dear sister, Mary Ann. She who was the midwife for others as they were birthed into eternal life now shares with them, with her family members, and with her Ursuline Sisters who have gone before us in faith, the full glory of the resurrection.

*"Arise, my beloved, my beautiful one, and come!
For see, the winter is past; the rains are over and
gone.*

*The flowers appear on the earth.
The time of pruning the vines has come.
The song of the dove is heard in our land.
The fig tree puts forth its figs
and the vines, in bloom, give forth fragrance.
Arise, my beloved, my beautiful one, and come!"*

Song of Songs 2:10-13