

SISTER KATHRYN KEEFE CDP



Sister Kathryn Keefe, formerly known as Sister Mary Michael, entered eternal life on Saturday, May 30, 2015 in McCullough Hall Nursing Center, San Antonio, Texas at the age of 87. Sister Kathryn was born in Victoria, Texas, on June 23, 1927, the third of seven children of John Michael Keefe and Margaret Ida Warburton. As a very young child, Kathryn was asked to memorize stories, poems and songs to entertain the adults. Perhaps the roots of her talents in speech and drama were discovered very early.

John Keefe owned a mercantile store in Victoria, where his children enjoyed playing with the items for sale. For 10 years the Keefe family lived out in the country where Kathryn said she had time to read, be with her close-knit family, develop a vivid imagination, a deep love of God and prayer, and a love of learning. At the age of seven, she decided she would be a Sister.

Kathryn attended Nazareth Academy in Victoria, where she graduated with honors. Having visited her aunt, Sister Margaret Rose Warburton at Our Lady of the Lake Convent on several occasions, Kathryn didn't have a difficult time deciding to attend OLL College; she came as a freshman in May of 1944. After that year, she decided to enter the convent to become a Sister of Divine Providence; she came in September, 1945

Kathryn requested the name Sister Mary Michael when she entered the novitiate a year later, 1946. After one more year she was deemed ready to teach grades 5 and 6 at St. Anthony's School in San Antonio. After five years, she was assigned to Providence High school, where she taught Speech, Spanish, Religion and directed plays from 1952 to 1960. During this time she earned a Master's in Speech and Drama.

In 1960, she began an 18 year stint teaching at Our Lady of the Lake College, where she founded the Department of Speech and Drama and was its Chair. Along the way, she changed her name to Sister Kathryn. By 1965, she was able to earn a PhD in Speech and Drama from Northwestern University. The following year was the centennial of the Sisters of Divine Providence in Texas and Sister was given the assignment of producing a dramatic representation of the Congregation's history. Held at the Municipal Auditorium, the production, with its large cast of Sisters and others, was highly acclaimed.

After 31 years in academics, Sister Kathryn's life took a major turn in 1978 when she was 51. Bishop Patrick Flores, newly appointed bishop of El Paso, asked her to serve his diocese as liaison to the Charismatic Renewal. During her 10 years in this position she was elected to national office and attended an international meeting in Rome. In 1988 she moved to Las Cruces and founded a Spiritual Resource Center, where she served for 8 years. Of her ministry, Sister Kathryn wrote, "My work is to teach trust in a loving, provident God amidst the struggles of society."

In 1996, Sister Kathryn returned to the San Antonio area, serving at Moye Center in Castroville for three years, and tutoring at OLLU until 2005. To her retirement she brought a peaceful, gentle presence. Her beautiful eyes, generous smile and gracious manner endeared her to many.

She is survived by her sisters Maryann Keefe Eichholz, and Karen Keefe Dooley (John Dooley), her brother Victor Keefe (Sharon), sister-in law Marie Keefe, numerous nieces, nephews and their families and her Sisters of Divine Providence. She was preceded in death by her parents John Michael Keefe and Margaret Ida Warburton Keefe, her sister Elisabeth Keefe Cole and brother-in-law Byron Cole, her brothers Michael Keefe and William Keefe and brother-in-law Bob Eichholz.

The Rosary is Tuesday, June 2, 4:00 p.m. and the Wake is at 6:30 p.m.

A Mass of Resurrection will be Wednesday, June 3, 10:30 a.m.

All services will be in Annunciation Chapel at Our Lady of the Lake Convent Center.

*In lieu of flowers, you may wish to make a memorial contribution to the Sisters of Divine Providence,
515 S.W. 24th Street, San Antonio, TX 78207-4619.*