



Sr Helen Ryan RIP

October 31st 1931 – February 26th 2023

Requiem Mass – Celebrants - Fr Brian Lawless PP

Fr Martin Mc Grath

St Bernadette's Church, Clogher Road, Dublin 12

Helen Ryan was Nelly to her family. She was born on the 31st October 1931 in Tipperary where her parents Nora and Patrick Ryan ran a business at 62 Main Street, in Tipperary town. They had a large family of two boys and eight girls. They were hard working people, steadfast Catholics and strong supporters of the Church.

Helen attended the Mercy convent primary and secondary schools in the town for her education. Afterwards she served her time in the family business. In this she was very successful and a good administrator. Then at a point, Helen decided to put her talents to the business of the Lord. A chain of circumstances led her to the Marist convent, Carrick on Shannon where she finally arrived on the eve of the Feast of Christ the King in 1953. This was a new life for her with many strange practices but Helen was able to evaluate all that was important in life and what was not so important. She was strong willed and determined and never wavered.

The date of profession was August 1955 when Helen made her first profession together with fourteen others. Today eight of that group of sisters have passed on to their eternal reward. After profession Helen served community and school in Carrick on Shannon as chief chef for the next fifteen years. After second novitiate in 1970 in Manchester, Helen followed a further course in Business Management and Catering which she enjoyed. Her world became enlarged when she was appointed provincial bursar in England. In the execution of this assignment she soon learned to negotiate the motorways of Great Britain and so carried out this ministry in the allotted time. Her service was now required as Superior in Fulham, followed by Gower Street (London) where she had care of students as part of the Pastoral Team there. Her next move was up the country to Nymphsfield where the community looked after children deprived of home and care. Later she supervised the complete changeover of this work to the work of retreat.

The Marist Sisters were by this time working for the peace effort in Northern Ireland under the direction of Bishop Cathal Daily so Helen took her turn in that ministry. She

administered the hostel for socially deprived people under the Housing Executive. This was a very fulfilling ministry for Helen which she successfully carried out to the millennium.

Accounts still needed to be kept so Helen moved to Kenilworth Square. This was a time of great change in Education in Ireland. Finances were moved around and also property was re-valued. So her talents were most helpful in solving problems. She was always there to receive the sisters and make everyone feel at home.

By 2005 after a wide and varied lifetime experience Helen moved to Sundrive Road. Arthritis was troubling her, yet she managed to lend a hand wherever she could. She was always ready to give advice and measure the best way to deal with a situation. Her visits to hospital became more frequent, yet she was always hopeful. Then at last the fact had to be faced that her case was terminal. In February 2023 she returned to her own room from St James' hospital. Fr John O'Gara administered the Last Sacraments on Friday 24th of February. She was alert as she was propped up on a chair. By the Sunday she had deteriorated. The hospice nurses were caring for her as she lay back and breathed her last.

May the prayer of St John Henry Newman accompany Helen to her Eternal Rest.

'when the fever of life is over
and our work is done,
then in His mercy
may He give us a safe lodging
and a holy rest
and peace at the last'

The Ryan Family from Tipperary, Dublin and London were present for the funeral. After Mass, Community and Family gathered around the grave in Mount Jerome cemetery. Prayers were led by Fr Lawless and there Helen was laid to rest as we sang the 'Salve Regina'. Then family and community retreated to the Dropping Well restaurant to share a meal and a last farewell.

Helen Rest in Peace.

