

Sister Mary Jane Scanlan, SSND – 70 Year Jubilee!



“May I ever remain a faithful & grateful daughter of Notre Dame.”

On March 6, 1934, I was born to Ellen Marie Ducey and Thomas Richard Scanlan. A baby boy would have been more welcomed by Tom and Gerry, the 8 - and 10-year-old sons of the family, but this healthy little girl was gratefully received by her parents, especially since my Mother had not been well.

At this time the family was living in East Boston, Massachusetts, but since a future move to Roxbury was in the offing, I was taken to the Shrine of Our Lady of Perpetual Help to receive the gift of Divine Life and was placed under Our Lady’s protection receiving the name of Mary Jane.

Mother was sick on and off during my pre-school days, so there were nurses when I was smaller and later my grandmother and various aunts, but always there was Dad.

At four and a half I began kindergarten at Farragut Public School and the following year I was admitted to the first grade at Mission Grammar School. Here I was prepared for First Holy Communion, received on Ascension Thursday, 1941, and Confirmation, received in 1947. This same year I was graduated and went up to Mission High School graduating in 1951.

The doctors couldn’t help Mother, and in 1941 she was confined to bed permanently. How patient she was, and how kind the Public Health Nurses who came frequently to care for her! I think they planted the seed of love for nursing.

On Sunday afternoon, July 25, 1943, Mother received Extreme Unction and died shortly after the priest left the room. In June of that same year,

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1943, my two brothers had graduated from High School and since it was war time, both joined the Navy within a few months. My father's aunt came to live with Dad and me.

During the summer months of my junior and senior years of High School I worked as a nurses' aide and thoroughly enjoyed the occupation.

As a senior my thoughts naturally turned to the future. For a long time I had wanted to be a Sister like my teachers, but of late there was the happiness I had found in caring for the sick. I was advised to look around at the Nursing Orders, which I did, but none could compare with the Notre Dame Sisters, whom I loved. So, I told myself that nursing was a whim and that I would like teaching as well when I had tried it, and wrote for admittance to our Candidature.

On the morning of August 28, 1951, I received the Candidate's Bonnet in the chapel at the Grammar School Convent and boarded the train for Baltimore. A week later I left the Motherhouse to teach third graders at Our Lady of Fatima School, Fort Lee, New Jersey.

The good example and the happiness of the Sisters at this mission made the year a happy one, but teaching was not what I had hoped it would be. Since there was another year before Reception I determined to try again.

During my second year as a Candidate, I lived at the Motherhouse and taught the first grade at Saint Ann's School in Baltimore. How different it was! I loved every minute with those children and looked forward eagerly to Reception.

I received the Habit of a Notre Dame Sister on July 8, 1953. This most happy of years, spent putting on not only the Habit but the habits of a Notre Dame, growing spiritually as the new Motherhouse grew outside our Novitiate windows, was continued with Profession during the Marian Year, July 29, 1954.

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Profession during the Marian Year, July 29, 1954.

My first Obedience sent me to Saint Ambrose School, Baltimore, as teacher of third grade and later fourth grade. I studied at Notre Dame College on Saturdays and during the summers.

Although I was studying, I was allowed to help at [Notch Cliff](#) for a week in the summers. This reawakened my love for the sick.

So, when an Obedience to nurse at Villa Maria, Notch Cliff was given to me, my surprise was great, but my gratitude and joy were greater still. It is such a privilege to care for Christ's spouses!

May I ever remain a faithful and grateful daughter of Notre Dame.

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Sister Mary Jane served as a "faithful and grateful" nurse for most of her 70 years!



Home and Sanitarium for sick and convalescent sisters,
the erection of which is one of the works of our
beloved Mother.