



**Eulogy of Sister Kathleen, BVM (Joselle)**  
Mary Frances Clarke Chapel, March 24, 2022

Good morning. It is good to be together to celebrate the life of our Sister Kathleen Franklin.

Kathleen Marie Franklin was born on June 24, 1932, in Hempstead, N.Y. She was the youngest child of Thomas and Catherine (Halley) Franklin and joined eight siblings: Thomas, Charles, Edward, twins Dorothy and Robert, Loretta, and twins Patricia and Joseph. Her father worked as a dispatcher for a tugboat company directing boat traffic from his office in a skyscraper while her mother held down the home front. Kathleen referred to her mother as “the most gentle, caring, fun-loving, thoughtful, hardworking person in my life.”

Kathleen recalls her father piling family and friends into their Studebaker to drive to the ocean where they all learned how to swim. As a young girl she loved sleighing and skiing at a nearby golf course and climbing trees and playing in the woods behind her home with her sister Patty. Sometimes they remained still to watch the birds care for their young in the nest. Patty and Joe were always thinking up new ways to have fun. Once Kathleen joined them to organize a backyard carnival for the neighborhood children and even charged an entrance fee.

Kathleen’s four oldest brothers served in the armed forces during World War II. Thomas was a marine staff sergeant, Charles a merchant marine, Edward an army corporal and Robert also served as a soldier. Sadly, Edward was killed in Germany only 28 days before the end of the war in Europe. Her brother Joseph fought in the Korean War. Her sister Dorothy, the former SM Robertelle, entered the community in 1942, but withdrew in 1969. Loretta became a nurse and Patty professed vows as a Sister Aimee with the Visitation sisters in Brooklyn, N. Y.

Kathleen attended Our Lady of Loretto, a BVM grade school, and Mary Louis Academy, a Josephite high school. She worked at a phone company, a bank, and a hospital serving those with mental illness before entering the congregation on June 8, 1955. She received the name Joselle upon her reception on March 19, 1956, professed first vows on Feb. 3, 1958, and lived 66 years as a BVM. After profession, Kathleen was sent to study at Mundelein where she earned a bachelor’s degree in English. Later she completed a master’s degree in education with a specialization in reading from Clarke College.

Kathleen’s first mission was to St. Patrick in Cedar Falls, Iowa, where she taught second and third grade. She recalled another sister looking her straight in the eye and telling her, “Be on your toes. This is a college town.” Missions at St. Joseph in Rock Island, Ill., and Sacred Heart in Davenport, Iowa, followed as Kathleen earned a reputation as a practical, caring, creative and dedicated educator.

Kathleen treasured her family and her home state of New York; so she was thrilled when she returned to Long Island in 1971. For almost two decades, she served as the resource center director at St. Thomas grade school in West Hempstead, N.Y. She did an outstanding job providing individualized learning that included teaching computer skills in the early days of personal computers. The students always looked forward to spending time with her. Kathleen also worked fourteen years as a computer instructor for CompuTar, Inc., an outside company that provided computer training for schools. After retiring, she volunteered for RotaCare to provide health care services to the indigent and assisted at the community library. She was the last BVM to leave Long Island, N.Y.

Kathleen had a bit of an adventurous spirit. For thirty years she lived in inter-community convents that even included sisters from other countries. Many needed a place to stay while they completed a college degree or needed an affordable place close to their work. All brought unique gifts to share – excellent cooks, great storytellers, a wonderful sense of humor, and inspirational stories of overcoming physical challenges or a marginalized upbringing. Kathleen commented, “It always was an enriching, challenging experience [that] became a community with a broad horizon.” For her part, Kathleen entertained her housemates with wonderful stories about her family and growing up on Parson’s Drive in Hempstead, N.Y. and in their family home in Bloomington, N.Y. It was clear to all how deeply Kathleen loved her family!

Kathleen also had fond memories of two major events. The first was participating in the Mass celebrated by Pope John Paul II at Yankee Stadium in 1979. “All of us had great seats and were caught up in the excitement,” she commented. Then in 2006, Kathleen and Eileen Powell were thrilled to represent the BVM community at the 175<sup>th</sup> anniversary of St. Michael’s parish in Philadelphia. They were given seats at the head table and were introduced to a full house. Kathleen wrote, “We walked . . . about on ‘holy ground’ thinking of Mary Frances Clarke, the ‘Dublin ladies,’ and Rev. Terence J. Donaghoe and all of those who followed their leadership.”

Kathleen was a sweet, gentle, hospitable woman, a little bit shy, hard to ruffle and always willing to listen and help. She had a beautiful smile, a great sense of humor, a marvelous hearty laugh and she never lost her New York accent. She enjoyed reading, playing Scrabble and ping pong, and reportedly was an excellent chess player. She also was a good photographer and artist like her father.

Kathleen loved the beautiful surroundings of Mount Carmel and the opportunity to meet new people. She found a close friend and another adventurous spirit in Jeanne Granville. Together they enjoyed walking the campus both indoors and outdoors. Kathleen was most grateful for such a loving home.

Faith was an important part of Franklin family life and the BVM core values connected well with Kathleen’s upbringing. Being big-hearted and warm, Kathleen shared the charisma of Mary Frances Clarke with all whom she met. Being the youngest, Kathleen companioned siblings through difficult times and physical diminishment. Journeying with her siblings prepared her for her own journey. Jesus said, “For this is the will of the One who sent me, that everyone who sees and believes in God’s Only Begotten One will have eternal life; and I shall raise them up on the last day” (John 6:40). Comforted and strengthened by this promise, Kathleen let go of this world to join her parents and her deceased siblings, BVM sisters and friends in God’s loving presence. May the angels welcome her into paradise.