

# Memento for Sister Patricia Mulvaney, CSC

December 24, 1928 — August 13, 2018

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**These memories were shared by M. Joseph Cecile (Voelker), CSC, at the vigil, August 16, 2018, and the funeral mass August 17, 2018.**

Sister Patricia Mulvaney, CSC, beloved member of the Sisters of the Holy Cross and of the local community of Saint Catherine by the Sea Convent in Ventura, California, died August 13, 2018. Patricia entered the Congregation from Wyoming in 1948 after having studied nursing for a year in Denver, Colorado. She later earned her degree in nursing from Holy Cross Hospital School of Nursing in Salt Lake City, Utah, in 1954.

But Sister was more than a nurse. She was a hospital administrator; congregational superior at the local, regional and general levels; and a faithful community member for 70 years.

In listening to Sisters who lived with her, these are some of the loving remarks I heard:

Patricia was a real lady, refined, with good taste, at ease with both the highly educated and those working in the manual labor sector. One of the dietary employees at Community Memorial Hospital took the time to visit Sister during her last days to let her know, “Sister, we all love you!”

During the mid-1980s, Sister Patricia was charged with supervising the construction of the administration building of Saint Catherine’s. She was so proud of this addition to the living quarters which had been built 15 years earlier. Sisters today still delight in the open space, light and design of the building. How appropriate that Patricia’s wake and funeral take place in the space she had a hand in building and so loved!

Patricia’s love of family and friends was unconditional. Her introduction to Holy Cross was through her aunt, Sister M. Richardine (Seidel), CSC, and Patricia’s grandfather, Richard Seidel, who essentially **was** the music department of Saint Mary’s College from 1890 to the 1930s, having come from being a violinist with the Chicago Symphony. Mother M. Pauline (O’Neill), CSC, who hired “Pop” remarked, “But, Professor, you look so young!” His response: “Mother, I will remedy that day by day.”

Patricia enjoyed the company of both her older sister, Mary, who died in

2001 and her younger sister, Beth, both in the Congregation. She stayed in contact with the children of her brothers Pete and Dick who predeceased her. A few of her nieces and nephews and their families were able to regularly visit Sister in Ventura. Patricia spoke fondly of her oldest brother Vince who died in World War II and is buried in France. When the state of Wyoming, the place of Patricia's birth, was mentioned, Sister's ears perked up. Because of her many years ministering in Boise, half her heart continued to reside in Idaho.

Sister's love of beauty shone in her choice of art, music and nature. She treasured riding Highway 126 from Ventura to its end in Santa Clarita on our way to pick up Beth at the Burbank Airport. The fields of strawberries, orchards of avocados, oranges and mandarins, and mountains on either side of the valley fed her spirit more than the hustle-bustle of freeway traffic along the 101 or 118. Patricia enjoyed Gregorian Chant, the hymn *How Great Thou Art*, and the patriotic hymn *This Is My Song* set to the tune of Sibelius' Finlandia. We often sang the latter two with the memory-care folks at the nursing homes she and I visited every Tuesday morning.

Sister Patricia was a faithful religious. Sunday mornings at Saint Catherine's would find her seated in the chapel in her pew making her weekly holy hour for the needs of the Church. She spent time planning with others for the monthly feast day/birthday celebrations. Patricia was an integral part of the core leadership group of the Holy Cross Associates in Ventura the past six years. She never missed a planning meeting if at all she could help it, and contributed her wisdom to the exchange. Patricia was a member of our weekly Friday book group and wisdom sharers. Her persistent courage in dealing with diminishing eyesight, hearing and breathing was exemplary. Patricia did not want anything to prevent her from entering fully into life in community. She was a witness to determination, acceptance and how to accept loss. The list could go on.

Each of us has a particular memory of Patricia that is dear to us or that challenges us. Let the story come forth and inspire you to live life more fully, more consciously, so that the best version of yourself grows in the holiness we all aspire to.

God welcome and bless you, Patricia! Do not forget us when you speak to Jesus. Amen.

*Written by Sister M. Joseph Cecile (Voelker), CSC*