

**REFLECTION ON THE LIFE OF SISTER MARIE THERESA RYAN**  
**June 13, 1934 – March 18, 2026**  
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Isaiah, one of the great prophets of the Bible tells us:

**“Yahweh is the God of my salvation,**

**I trust in Him and have no fear”.**

**“Open our eyes to the wonder of this moment, the beginning ...”**

Last Wednesday at about 5.30am, Marie closed and opened her eyes to the wonder of the moment as she travelled her last journey home to the God she loved so very much, whom she knew accompanied her through the ups and downs of her life. We sympathise with Marie’s sisters Peach, Pauline, and Theresa, her brother John, and her many nieces, nephews, grand and great.

In 1980, when Marie celebrated her Silver Jubilee, she set the theme for her celebration as “Yahweh is the God of my salvation, I trust in him and have no fear”. Marie truly trusted God and had no fear. She lived these words all her life, and indeed she lived them even as she died.

Marie was born 13<sup>th</sup> June 1934 in Middle Cove, Newfoundland, to Gertrude Ellard and David Ryan. Gertrude and David had 5 children, Marie being the eldest. Marie joined our Presentation Congregation on 31<sup>st</sup> August 1952 and made her Final Profession of her vows on 15<sup>th</sup> July 1960. Marie lived faithfully our Presentation Life for 74 years ... what a lifetime of dedication and commitment!

Marie lived and ministered in many places on the Island of Newfoundland and also in the West Indies. She was a renowned Teacher and Principal. Her ministry took her to Deer Lake, Corner Brook, Avondale, Piccadilly, Trepassey, Renew, St. John’s, Gander, Antigua, and back again to St. John’s for the past number of years. In each of these places, Marie left her

legacy of gentleness and a great love of reading. Since she died last Wednesday 18<sup>th</sup> March 2026, I have heard so many remember her as their inspiration to read and enjoy.

Marie had the most beautiful smile. She could light up the room with her radiant smile which was not only on her lips but in her whole face. I have often heard it said for a smile to be really true, it must show in our eyes too. Mother Teresa once said: "We shall never know all the good that a simple smile can do". I was told that as the nurses attended to her just before she died, Marie smiled the most beautiful smile and said, "My Mother is here". I believe truly that Marie's Mother did come for her, to lovingly take her eldest daughter home. Our loved ones gone before us are all around us. They don't ever leave us in death. Their love continues unendingly. Marie did not realise the strength of the impact her smile had on us all. I loved to visit her, there were few words spoken by her, but her smile spoke volumes, and I left a better person because of the gentle, beautiful, genuine smile that lit her face and her eyes. We all know the song ... SMILE AND THE WHOLE WORLD SMILES WITH YOU! Wasn't it Shakespeare who said: "A smile cures the wounding of a frown". Marie cured many a frown.

Jesus told us.... Go and spread the good news. Marie did just that, not only by what she did or said, but by her very presence.

Marie, we will miss your beautiful presence and smile. We thank you for the blessings you brought to our lives. We thank you for your huge contribution to our Presentation Congregation. We know you will continue to take care of us and guide us. You will smile on us as you always did and cure our frowns. Until we meet again Marie, may God hold you in the palm of his hand.