

REFLECTION ON THE LIFE OF SR. REGINA QUIGLEY
December 17, 1936 – November 26, 2025
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We gather here this evening to celebrate the life of Sr. Regina Quigley, a Presentation Sister for many years.

Regina was born in St. John's on December 17th, 1936, to Winifred Hipditch and Harold Quigley. She was the eldest of three children, a sister, Geraldine, and a brother, Edward. Regina's three nieces, Joanne, Jacquie, Jane, have surrounded her with love over the years but especially in the past few days, and they were long days. How she loved you and how you loved her!

Regina joined our Presentation Congregation on September 8th, 1953. She was given the name of Mary Virginia ... But when the opportunity came she shed that name and returned to her own beautiful baptismal name. Regina has lived the Presentation Charism and way of life for 72 years of her almost 89 years. A committed, dedicated woman who offered her all in service throughout New Jersey, and particularly here in Newfoundland.

Martha Graham, a modern Dance teacher, once said "Dance is the hidden language of the Soul". Regina lived this in her lifetime. So many people have been touched by her, not only in her teaching but in her ministry of counselling and listening. In her celebration of her Golden Jubilee in 2006, she opened the liturgy with a song by Briege O'Hare, an Irish Poor Clare Sister, which reads:

**"Lead me Lord in your joyful dancing,
I will follow in your dance of life,
Then all my living will be true to you,
My loving God."**

And this is how Regina danced the dance of life, of her life, being led by her loving God.

I first met Regina in her beloved Port au Port when I came here 10 years ago. Her very presence had a sacred profundity, and even without speaking a word, her presence impacted the very soul of the other. Realizing her deteriorating health and knowing she could not continue any longer in Port au Port, she made the decision to come to the Motherhouse. She realized in truth and simplicity that this was what was being asked of her. In being true to herself she was true to the process of letting go. I brought her home to St. John's, flying from Deer Lake, and on arriving here at the airport, there were her nieces to meet and greet her. That greeting has left an indelible mark on my soul. Regina was truly loved.

After Regina had left Port au Port, Sandy, Deirdre and myself drove there, doing the complete journey in one go. We began clearing the house, and what a clearing! The local community generously and lovingly offered their help and eventually after some days of hard lifting and shredding, moving boxes etc. we were ready to have an open house for anyone who wanted to come and take the furniture, or books or ... So many homes were furnished. I remember distinctly a family who had recently moved into a new home ... had very little and could not afford to buy furniture. The look on the Mother's face remains forever etched on my mind. With tears streaming down her face...she asked..."is this true ... can we just take the furniture?" She unselfishly took only what they needed and with high excitement turned to her husband and said with bursting glee ... Sr. Regina is still taking care of us!' That's what Regina did ... took care of others. And Regina will continue to do that in her new life.

In preparing this reflection I opened the Bible at random wondering would the words say something to me. How does one describe a beautiful lady and a beautiful life? The pages fell open on the Gospel of John 15:15 – 18. Quoting the words "I shall not call you servants anymore; I call you friends. You did not choose me...no, I chose you. Love one another". Then I opened Regina's Golden Jubilee Booklet and would you believe, that was her choice of Gospel for the celebration. So I felt Regina was telling me/us, "This was my relationship with God...this was how I lived my life.....forever friends with my God".

Regina, like so many of our Sisters, ministered in many places. Teaching in Stephenville, Holy Heart here in St. John's, Avondale, Carbonear, she was

well known as a renowned Teacher, Principal. In 2003 Regina began her ministry of counselling in Port au Port and continued there for 23 years. She left an indelible mark on the whole area. The people loved her....so many times while I was there I heard the deep impact Regina had on the lives of so many. The residents of the Peninsula spoke so highly of her. She certainly carried Nano's lantern and guided so many with her light.

Some of you may not be aware that Regina was gifted with music in her feet! She was a dancer! I love the quote by Irving Berlin, an American composer. "The song may have ended, but the melody lingers on". Let's dare to take poetic license and rearrange that quote for Regina.....The song and dance may have ended but the memory lingers on. And that is true. Way back, many years ago, the first meeting of IPA (International Presentation Association) took place in Ireland and Regina attended. At one of the Prayer sessions Regina danced the music of the Magnificat. The memory lingers as some of the Sisters in attendance remember Regina so vividly, her grace, her movement, her prayer, that each time since, as they sing the Magnificat, they remember Regina. A fine tribute indeed.

Regina, we will miss you. Our faith tells us you have joined the heavenly chorus. Our faith tells us you are now united with all those you have loved and who have welcomed you with open arms. No doubt you are dancing your Magnificat with the accompaniment of the most wonderful orchestra! Rest well Regina. Thank you for your beautiful presence among us. And until we meet again may God and Nano hold you in the palm of their hands. God bless you, Regina.