

Vale Mother Eunice

This morning, Tuesday 15<sup>th</sup> June, we heard the sad news that Mother Eunice SSA had passed away peacefully overnight. Mother Eunice led a remarkable life of faith and service and we take this time to acknowledge her indelible contribution to the Society of the Sacred Advent (SSA), their schools and beyond.

Mother Eunice was a compassionate, caring, friendly, humble and unassuming woman, who dedicated much of her life to the SSA.

Born in 1936, Mother Eunice grew up in Mitchelton in Brisbane's north. She attended Mitchelton State School for her early years of schooling. Her family home was high set with the lower level the venue for her Parish's weekly Sunday School program. From very early on, Mother Eunice was drawn to the education and religious development of young children, a theme that remained constant throughout her life.

Mother Eunice sat for Sunday School examinations and developed a keen interest in teaching scripture to pre-school children. When she was seventeen, she was invited to take charge of the very popular Sunday School at her local church, St Matthew's Anglican Church, Grovely.

Mother Eunice worked at department store JCPenneys in Queen Street, Brisbane, and at women's fashion store Rockmores as a training staff. However, her early experiences teaching children led her to apply for a position at the School of the Hearing Impaired at Yeronga. After completing twelve months of training, Mother Eunice began teaching hearing impaired children at the school. After a year of teaching at Yeronga, Mother Eunice took a role at the Florence Kindergarten in Maroon where she taught for several years. Mother Eunice recalled that while she enjoyed this service, she felt a calling to do something else.

She went to Sydney to commence her religious life, training at the Anglican Board of Mission's (ABM) House of Epiphany. Here she met many people who would become lifelong friends. She worked at the Lockhart River Mission Station in North Queensland and at the St Paul's Mission on Moa Island in the Torres Strait.

She returned to Brisbane and after much consideration joined the religious order, the Sisters of the Society of the Sacred Advent, in 1965, testing her vocation to religious life over the following two years, and making her Profession on 21 August 1967. During this time, she undertook a course of studies with Canon Sharwood at the end of which she received an Associate Degree in Theology (Th.A.).

The Sisters' schools of St Catharine's in Warwick and St Anne's in Townsville were home to Mother Eunice before she returned to Community House at Albion and St Margaret's Anglican Girls School at the end of 1978. Mother Eunice was in charge of the Wafer Room at Community House for some years, where the motto of the workers was "Patience, Perseverance and Perfection". At its peak they were sending out 8.5 million wafers per year to parishes throughout Australia, New Zealand and Papua New Guinea.

Well known to many generations of students at both St Aidan's and St Margaret's, in 1982, she was elected Mother Superior of the Society of the Sacred Advent, serving on both School Councils, numerous committees and the Sisters' Trust over the next 30 years.

The Eunice Science and Resource Centre at St Margaret's was opened in 2012, named aptly in recognition of Mother Eunice's significant contribution and influence within the St Margaret's community. At St Aidan's, Eunice Plaza in The Link was named in her honour in 2017.

Mother Eunice is an exceptional example of the Sisters' philosophy, "to prepare a place for God in our hearts and minds, in our school community and in the world in which we live".

The St Aidan's and St Margaret's communities have lost an outstanding woman. Please join us in keeping Sisters Gillian and Sandra and Mother Eunice's family in your thoughts and prayers.