



**Sister Jane Teresa Culligan, SC**  
Entered into eternal life on June 26, 2024

It is my sincere honor to be the family member that Sister Jane requested to reflect on her life. I've prayed that the Holy Spirit would inspire my thoughts and memories. Frankly, I also prayed that my mother, whose memory of family history was so amazing, would flood my mind. Today as you may be aware, is the Feast of St. Thomas the Apostle, the doubting one. It is also my mom's 100th birthday. So, three celebrations are happening in heaven today; Sister Jane, my mom, and St Thomas are joyfully enjoying this feast day!

Three words can describe Sister Jane Teresa Culligan. Joyful, thoughtful, and prayerful. The Culligan clan is quite large, but I know every member would agree 100% that she brought joy to every occasion. She was a constant in our lives: baptisms, first communions, confirmations, weddings, funerals, and birthday parties. How did she make every one of us feel so special? Cindy remembers when she was making her first communion, Sister Jane was the only person besides her teachers allowed to be with the first communion candidates before Mass. That was such a special memory! But she was also there for sorrowful times, bringing peace and comfort. When my Uncle Jack was sick and dying,

Jane was there for Margie and the four girls. She sat vigil at the hospital, and during and after the funeral, comforted them all and guided them through their grief.

Jane had a way of joyfully singling you out for a special task. I lived a few towns away from St. Agnes in Paterson, where she was first assigned. On Sundays, she needed help with some children struggling to learn their prayers in preparation for first communion. So, I hopped on a bus to Paterson and worked with small groups of children. That small seed she planted inspired me to become a teacher.

Being thoughtful was her signature gift. She never missed sending cards or small gifts for birthdays, anniversaries, Christmas, Easter, and any special occasion. As Cindy shared, Aunt Jane would sit down at the beginning of each month and write out all her cards. She must have spent a ton of money on stamps alone!

She was undoubtedly prayerful. She added numerous people to her prayer list as she traveled and lived in many places. She felt the calling to Medjugorje and Our Lady's presence there. The visionaries who received monthly messages from Our Mother Mary to pray and convert our hearts became Jane's friends. My daughter Megan joined her there on one of her many pilgrimages. This trip inspired Megan to strengthen her faith and love of God. She wishes she could have joined us today, as I know Jane had special songs for her to sing. Megan was able to visit Sister Jane twice last year, once with me, Cindy, Kevin, and Janet, and the last one with Megan's husband Mike and son Lawson.

One of Jane's gifts from God was her ability to dance. She took it seriously in the years before entering the convent. She would go to New York for dance lessons as a ballerina, and everyone thought she would become a professional dancer. Instead, she danced for Jesus! Years after teaching, she became a dance therapist and used that gift to help others with movement. In those pre-convent years, she was quite glamorous, wearing the latest fashions, including dangling earrings. This brings to mind the story of King David. God told Samuel he had chosen a new king for Israel, and the new king was to be one of Jesse's seven sons. Samuel assumed the Lord would choose Jesse's oldest. But to everyone's surprise, the Lord chose the youngest, David. To every one of her family's surprise, Jesus singled Jane out to be his earthly servant and to teach and evangelize his people.

Jane's best evangelization was witnessing her mother. Although she faithfully raised her children in the Catholic faith, Grandma Culligan never became Catholic. Through Jane's great influence and inspiration, she arranged for my 79-year-

old grandmother to receive all three of her sacraments. My parents were her Godparents; she received Holy Communion, and I had the honor of being her sponsor for Confirmation.

I'll finish with two stories that characterize Sister Jane. Cindy told of a family wedding where everyone was dancing, including Jane. Jane somehow disappeared. She had left to use the ladies' room and, on her way back, heard music from another reception and joined in the dancing. She was nicely asked to leave that reception. The girls had a good laugh, referring to her as the wedding crasher!

While in Medjugorje with Jane, Megan noticed how Jane would do all the prayer sessions, but often went quiet. Megan realized she had dozed off. She nicknamed her Sister Sleepy. Similarly, Jane was notorious for being late. Unfortunately, her tardiness would irk my mom, who called her the late Sister Jane. Mom would lie about when dinner would be ready by at least an hour so she might show up on time.

Aunt Jane, I know your parents and siblings were waiting for you with open arms, and you are all having a glorious reunion in heaven. As Megan shared, "We do not mourn your passing. Your life here on earth was beautiful, but the life you gained in heaven is beyond compare. Therefore, we rejoice with you in your eternal rest and pray we will embrace again when our time comes." Watch over us. Rest peacefully, you earned it. Dance pain-free with all the angels and saints. Remember, there is no time in heaven. You'll never be late; you're always right on time.

Marilyn Reichert  
Sister Jane's niece