

Sister Janet McLaughlin, SC

Entered eternal life on May 2, 2026

We gather today to celebrate the life of Sister Janet McLaughlin (a.k.a. Sister Ralph Marie) who entered the Sisters of Charity on September 6th, 1960.

There were 76 of us that day and we became known as the Band of 1960!

We would spend four years in formation as a Postulant, Novice and then two years as Temporary Professed before going out on a Mission. We were the first Band to remain at Xavier Center, the House of Studies, for two full years, for us to complete our college education and be prepared for our future ministries.

The summer of 1964, while finishing our studies at Xavier Center, the professed Sisters from the Missions returned to complete their coursework to graduate. Word from Trenton that several Sisters were short of one credit in physical education and that they would not be eligible to graduate. Very quickly, Sister Ralph Marie's life changed. Since she had been a College Professor at Montclair State University where they specialized in education for New Jersey, Janet was chosen to teach the course in physical education to the Sisters.

A good number, 20 or more of the Sisters, would report to Xavier Center on the days assigned for Phys. Ed. in full black habit, with modified cap and veil and "their brand-new sneakers," to meet Sister Ralph for class.

They would go to the second floor, to the "Outside deck," in 90-degree weather, under the full sunlight and do their required program with Sr. Ralph! As they left class every day, being animated with each other, we knew they were not saying their prayers!

Sister Janet both held a bachelor's degree in mathematics from Montclair State University, as well as a master's degree in mathematics from Boston College.

In her 65 years as a Sister of Charity, Janet had a very diversified career. She was an educator in both New Jersey and Rhode Island. She served as a Teacher at Bayley-Ellard High School, Madison, Star of The Sea Academy, Longbranch, St. Michael High School, Jersey City and Saint John High School, Paterson. She was also the Director of Equal Opportunity Programs at the College of Saint Elizabeth and Director of Educational Programs for the Chaplaincy Council of Morris County.

We connected at Congregation Day 2016, where I learned that she has been serving the United Nations in global ministries since 2006.

I experienced her as a transformed woman, saturated with the Vincention-Setonian Legacy. She shared passionately with me about all the global concerns at the United Nations. Sister Janet had become a Social Justice Advocate which never left her. This year she participated in the "No Kings Rally" at the Green in Morristown with other Sisters of Charity. They were thanked for being a part of the rally by many other attendees.

Sister Janet and I reconnected in December 2018, when she moved to the Motherhouse. It didn't take her long to realize that the Sisters were having issues at times trying to get over-the-counter products. Janet searched the Web to find out who would deliver to Convent. She, with her math background, researched the prices to compare costs to find the most reasonable prices. Janet herself went to CVS and Walgreens to negotiate with the managers about reasonable prices and delivery. Through her creativity we now have a commissary for our local Community.

In time Janet became treasurer for our local Community. Always serving our needs, Janet never lost the passion to serve wherever needed.



Sister Janet went to the hospital and her two ministries at home, including the Supply Commissary and the Community finances, were in complete order. Janet being Janet, she needed to have things set before she would give herself permission to go the hospital. The communication back and forth was (and I quote) “I’m having tests, pray for me. Calls and visits welcomed.”

On May 1st, we knew that Janet was going to Rehab, but by the evening the doctor cancelled the move.

On May 2nd, before Mass, Sister Maureen Shaughnessy expressed to the Sisters in Chapel that she had very sad news. Sister Janet has gone home to God.

It is ironic how our minds recall some things. When we were in our first two years of formation, our director at spiritual conferences, would ask this question, “What kind of Religious will you be; one that rusts out, or one that wears out?” It is obvious that Sister Janet wore out in her ministries.

Janet there is such a void in our Community. The loss of you has been a shock. Your ministries are in complete order, but who will be able to do what you have done? Thank you for all that you have done these eight years in our local Community. Godspeed. We will miss you.

We know where Janet is. She is in heaven in the loving embrace of our Creator, finally at rest.

~ Sister Catherine Morrisett, SC