

Sister Lawrence Mahon, SC
Entered eternal life on January 8, 2026

When people ask me about my family, I often respond, jokingly, “Have you ever seen the movie *My Big Fat Greek Wedding*? Well, that’s my family, except it’s *My Big Fat Irish Catholic Wedding*.”

I’m an only child, but I am fortunate to have a big fat Irish Catholic extended family on both my mother and father’s side of the family. We did everything together. We were deeply involved in one another’s lives. Aunt Margaret and Aunt Theresa were always there—at every birthday party, graduation, and major life event. They never missed a dance recital. I have countless photos from those recitals, from kindergarten through high school, with me standing between my aunts, each year in a different sequined costume.

And yet, despite all that togetherness, our time with them usually came in small pieces. A few hours at a party. A few hours at a graduation. A brief visit to their school, parish, or convent. Just handfuls of hours at a time. But over the years, those hours added up. That’s how so many of us here today came to know and love my aunts.

I was blessed, though, with a very different—and very special—opportunity to know them more deeply.

When I left home to study engineering in college, I was overwhelmed. I had gone to a small Catholic high school where I was a big fish in a small pond. Overnight, I became a small fish in a very big pond. I was no longer the smartest or most talented. I was surrounded by people who were smarter and more talented than me. I struggled in math and science courses that I had once excelled in—so much so that my Uncle Charlie had to tutor me in calculus my freshman year. I also had a new sense of freedom, independence, and autonomy that I had never experienced before. I didn’t know how to handle it... what my boundaries were. It was all so terrifying and overwhelming. I wanted to quit. Take a much easier path. I felt like I wasn’t smart enough. I wasn’t good enough. I felt like I was failing.

But I didn’t fail. What saved me... *who* saved me... in part, were my aunts.

On more Fridays than I can count, I took the train from Hoboken to Hackensack, where Aunt Margaret and Aunt Theresa would pick me up at the train station, and I would spend weekends with them at their convent, alongside Sr. Claire, Sr. Madeline, and Sr. Emily. We lived life together. I would cook for them, and we would share meals together. We would sit around and just talk. I had my own room at the convent, and I left personal things there, to make traveling on the train back and forth much easier. We also prayed together. We went to mass together on Sundays and went to chapel together in their convent each day to pray together in silence.

For that year of my life, and several years afterward, my faith was at its strongest. And it’s that faith, nurtured by my aunts, and the relationship I built with them, that carried me through. And that one year in college turned into ten years. And that one degree turned into three. I ended up graduating from Stevens with my Ph.D. in engineering, and in true form, Aunt Margaret was there at my graduation to celebrate with me. Unfortunately, Aunt Theresa was ill in the Villa and couldn’t attend, but she was there in spirit.

What made that time so extraordinary was the way I came to know my aunts—not in passing moments, not in brief celebrations, but in daily life. More than a handful of hours at a party or a recital; I essentially lived with them. I saw behind the curtain into how they lived: how they treated one another, how they interacted with the other sisters, how they served their church community.

I no longer saw them only as my aunts, or as Sisters of Charity, or as teachers and principals and pastoral associates. I saw them as people. As individuals. As intelligent and well educated, thoughtful, and deeply faithful women whom I came to love and admire in an entirely new way.



The time I shared with my Aunt Margaret and Aunt Theresa that year will always have a special place in my heart that nothing will ever replace and nothing will ever fill.

Dr. Alicia Mahon, grandniece of Margaret (*Sister Lawrence*)
and Theresa (*Sister Theresa Mahon*)