

**SISTER MARY ANN PHELAN OSF
1939-2014**



Mary Ann Phelan was born September 16, 1939, in Des Moines, Iowa, the daughter of Martin and Mary (Rooney) Phelan. She and her twin brother Marty joined brothers Pat and John as the “big kids” in the Phelan family. Later, Sue, Mike, and Bill completed the family of five brothers and two sisters.

Mary Ann attended Mingo Consolidated Schools, graduating in 1957. She entered the Sisters of St. Francis at Mount St. Clare Convent on September 8, 1958, and received the name Sister Mary Cephas at her reception on June 15, 1959, later resuming her baptismal name. She pronounced perpetual vows on August 12, 1964. Among her novitiate classmates were Sisters Kathleen Cleary, Paschal Hocum, Shawn Kelley, Judith McKenna, Evelyn McKenna, and Dorothy Mae Stolmeier.

Sister Mary Ann received a Bachelor of Science degree in elementary education at De Paul University. Her early ministry included teaching primary grades at St. Ann’s School Toluca, Illinois; St. Patrick’s School, Clinton, Iowa; and St. Kieran School, El Cajon, California. In 1969 she began thirty-five years of ministry at Mount St. Clare College/ The Franciscan University of the Prairies serving in various positions including Dean of Women, Registrar, and Director of Development and Institutional Advancement. Sister Mary Ann also served on the General Council of the Sisters of St. Francis from 1976-1980. After leaving university service in 2004, she ministered as Planned Giving Officer in Development for the Sisters of St. Francis, becoming Development Director in 2012. She remained in that role until her final illness.

Sister Mary Ann served on a variety of boards, committees, and civic organizations in Clinton including the Chamber of Commerce and Clinton Rotary, becoming the first woman Rotarian in Clinton in 1987. She was also a charter member of Clinton Trees Forever and participated in that organization’s mission of planting trees to beautify the environment and contribute to the conservation of land and energy. She was selected as a civic/community Woman of Achievement by the Clinton YWCA in 2003.

In 2014, Sister Mary Ann was chosen by her congregation to be honored at the Franciscan Federation Annual Conference as a person known for *Cultivating ‘Kindom’ Power* by creating a

sense of hospitality and inclusivity. She was known for her tireless effort to cultivate an atmosphere of welcome and acceptance at The Canticle, the home of the Clinton Franciscans. As head of the social committee there, Mary Ann recognized every social event as an opportunity to share Franciscan hospitality.

Left to honor her memory are brothers Patrick (Janet) Phelan, Michael Phelan, and Bill (Sara) Phelan, sister, Sister Anne Martin Phelan, sisters-in-law Mary Lee Phelan and Janna Phelan, a large extended family, and her Clinton Franciscan sisters with whom she made her home for almost 56 years. Preceding her in death were her parents and her brothers Martin and John. Sister Mary Ann died on June 20, 2014 at Mercy Medical Center.