

Sister Geraldine Shea

*“Being a part of the Sisters of St. Joseph is the highlight of my life,
and I happily observed my 75th Anniversary in September of this past year.”*



Sister Geraldine Shea was born in Boston and raised in Jamaica Plain, one of four sisters and five brothers. Her father owned a market in Roxbury, and her brothers would work there after school. She went to Blessed Sacrament School and then to high school at St. Thomas High School in Jamaica Plain, where she first met the Sisters of St. Joseph. There was one moment in her senior year, while she was in the Office Practice Room where students learned typing and working with various business machines when she looked up at the teacher of whom she was quite fond, and it struck her quite suddenly that she knew she wanted to be just like Sister Thomasette. She entered the Sisters of St. Joseph of Boston immediately upon graduation when she was seventeen years of age.

Sister Geraldine was first missioned to Sacred Heart School in East Cambridge, where she was assigned to teach 4th grade. She remembers vividly that the very day she left the Novitiate to work and live at Sacred Heart in East Cambridge was the day that her sister, Mary, received her habit and also became a Sister of St. Joseph. In East Cambridge, every building was attached to the other, the school to the rectory, the convent to the Church. In the ten years she lived and worked there, she never really had to go outside. What a change it was to next be missioned to St. James School in Haverhill, where she wasn't used to all of the snow and ice on the ground and between buildings. She humorously recalled the children there, kindly helping her up off of the snowy ground on numerous occasions.

She was next asked to teach junior high students at Sacred Heart in Roslindale where she remained for eight years, and from there, she spent the next seventeen years at St. Mary's in Brookline. She was also continuing her studies, taking business and education classes on the weekends and during the summers. Upon finishing at St. Mary's, Sister Geraldine was missioned to St. Brigid's in South Boston and worked there for eighteen years as secretary to the principal. Here, it was very obvious that both students and parents loved her as she was always there for the students. She was a great listener with a caring, gentle presence.

“I always wanted my students to know there was something special about being a Sister (of St. Joseph). I met so many people along the way and always tried to present a favorable impression of my experience as a Sister and the lifestyle a Sister lives, both intellectually and spiritually!”

Upon retirement, Sister occasionally volunteered at Fontbonne Convent doing work as a receptionist (as needed), and now Sister Geraldine continues to give of her time, volunteering three times a week as a cashier in the cafeteria at St. Joseph Preparatory High School in Brighton.

To Sister Geraldine Shea, we say, Thank You for your seventy-five years of presence to the children.

