

**Sister Francis Raftery, SC**  
Entered eternal life on May 2, 2020

Sister Francis Raftery was a Sister of Charity to her core. She lived the mandates of poverty and simplicity with grace and joy. This richly talented woman embraced these challenges as clearly evidenced by her sparse belongings and the meager contents of her wardrobe. If you were to give Fran a suit you know she needed, you could not expect to see her wearing it - someone else maybe in it, but not Fran. Also inspiring was her poverty of spirit. Though herself a “superlative” in every way, Fran was humble. She enjoyed simple blessings of her life – daisies, an egg salad sandwich for dinner, curious George and children, her brother Franny’s poignant bagpipe strains and Billy’s basketball prowess, hearing the escapades of her nieces and nephews, her cabinet at CSE, retreat at Weston and high tea in the village gathering place, the unique offerings of country craft shops, and preparing Thanksgiving turkey and gravy for the gang. All this simply wonderful.



Compelled by the call of mission, Fran moved from one to another ministry doing what was demanded with vigor, competence, insight, clarity and sensitivity. Whether as a teacher, provincial, president, patient advocate, Fran won the respect and love of her colleagues. As many have reflected, every encounter with Fran lifted you up, helped you to see your gifts and to celebrate the person you are.

Who was this beloved Sister of Charity who took up residence in the back of our chapel for every Congregational event? A tell all expectation is foolish. While Fran was down to earth and accessible, she was equally complicated and in some ways out of reach. But still Fran was a cherished friend, exceptional minister, proud Sister of Charity and grateful for her Irish roots. And, well she should be.

Fran was raised in a family strengthened by an active faith, nourished by sure, understated love, balanced by the ability to laugh in good times and bad, always ready to be entertained by Aunt Kitty’s hilarious monologues, and joyful in the richness of their family life. I can’t help but think Fran’s humility and openness of heart was her mother’s gift. Mas, the name Rita, Francis and William gave their mother, possessed the most engaging, ever present twinkle in her eyes. Her Irish eyes did more than smile. Though endearingly warm, their glint taught a life lesson Fran would never forget. Don’t take yourself too seriously; always be ready to laugh at yourself.

We praise and thank you God for giving us Francis Raftery, Sister of Charity, sister, teacher, leader, friend and reminder that all blessings received are blessings to be given away.

Sister June Favata, SC