

Sister Shawn Kelley, OSF
1929 – 2024

Sister Shawn Kelley, age 95, passed away Monday, August 19, at The Alverno in Clinton, IA. A funeral Mass will be celebrated at 10:00 a.m. on Friday, August 23, at The Canticle, 841 13th Ave N in Clinton, with Rev. James Vrba presiding. Visitation will be at The Canticle from 4:00 to 6:00 p.m. on Thursday, August 22, with a rosary at 4:00 p.m. and wake service at 6:30 p.m. Burial will be in St. Irenaeus Calvary Cemetery. Pape Funeral Home is assisting.

Lois Audrey Kelley was born July 23, 1929, in Burlington, IA, the youngest child of Walter and Edna (Vogelgesang) Kelley. She had one brother, Richard, and two sisters, Jean and Janice. A convert to Catholicism, she was baptized on December 20, 1952, at St. James Church in Washington, IA.

She attended Grimes Elementary School in Burlington and graduated from Burlington High School in 1947. She obtained a B.A. degree in Physical Education from Iowa State Teachers College in Cedar Falls, IA. She taught in Washington, IA, prior to entering religious life. She later earned a M.A. degree in Guidance and Counseling from San Diego State College, San Diego, CA.

Lois entered the Sisters of St. Francis at Mount St. Clare Convent, Clinton, on September 8, 1958. She received the name Sister Mary Shawn at her reception on June 15, 1959. She made her first profession on August 12, 1961, and her final vows on August 12, 1964. Her novitiate classmates were Sisters Kathleen Cleary, Paschal Hocum, Evelyn McKenna, Judith McKenna, Mary Ann Phelan, and Dorothy Mae Stolmeier.

Sister Shawn taught at schools in Lexington, NE; St. Louis, MO; and El Cajon, Palm Springs, and Riverside, CA. She also taught at Mount St. Clare Academy and College and Sacred Heart School in Clinton. She primarily taught junior high courses, physical education, biology, English, and

guidance. She also served as a council member for the Sisters of St. Francis from 1972 to 1976.

She retired from education in 1996 and returned to The Canticle in Clinton. She assisted the administrator of The Canticle and enjoyed volunteering at the Felix Adler Children's Discovery Center.

In her earlier days, Sister Shawn was an avid tennis player. She also enjoyed knitting, reading, and writing. She shared her love of reading by participating in literature classes and book clubs at The Canticle. She valued communicating with asylum-seekers living in Illinois.

Sister Shawn is survived by two nephews, Steve (Diana) Crusan and Garrel Kelley; extended family and friends; and the Sisters of St. Francis with whom she shared life for 65 years. She was preceded in death by her parents; brother, Richard (Evelyn); and sisters, Jean (Harold) Crusan and Janice Scott.