

## Remembering Sr. Dorothy Ann Kelly



**Women's History Month** seems a very fitting time to reflect and pay tribute to Sr. Dorothy Ann Kelly, OSU, our teacher, friend, mentor, advocate, leader, and role model. Since March 27, 2024, will mark the 15<sup>th</sup> anniversary of her death, the editorial committee has decided to dedicate each issue of the next year to the commemoration of her life and achievements.

Whether you knew her personally or admired her from afar, Sr. Dorothy Ann left an indelible mark on every graduate of the College of New Rochelle by virtue of the legacy she created as student, Ursuline sister, history professor, dean, president and chancellor. Her reputation became our reputation, and her history is forever entwined with ours.

She worked for peace and justice in the City of New Rochelle, in New York State, throughout the country and around the globe. As an innovative servant leader and true daughter of St. Angela Merici her influence spanned six decades of dramatic change in higher education, the Catholic Church, women's rights and world history.

Dorothy Ann Kelly came to CNR as a day student from the Bronx in September of 1947, having never seen the campus until the day she arrived for her first class. With her winning smile, sharp intellect, and engaging personality she immediately emerged as a leader. Her deep faith was nourished by the Ursuline Sisters, and she answered the call to her vocation, entering the novitiate after graduation in 1951. As a daughter, biological and spiritual sister, aunt, scholar, executive, trailblazer, peacemaker, and a woman of faith, she inspired everyone around her to be the best that they could be.

Sr. Dorothy Ann was a noted consensus builder whose gifts of attentive listening, insightful analysis and courageous decision making changed many lives and institutions. Her sage advice and brave example encouraged others to accept a challenge, overcome the fear of failure, and recognize the benefits of collaboration. She often reminded us to never hesitate to ask for help. She was certainly always there to offer it.

Praise and admiration poured forth at the time of her sudden death. In his eulogy, the words of Fr. Leo O'Donovan, SJ beautifully captured her spirit: "Dorothy Ann Kelly was a beautiful woman with style, flair, an infectious humor that could turn mischievous, all this wrapped in wisdom. He went on to say: "Everyone respected and admired her, but they also loved her. ...And so it was with a deeply social sensitivity that Dorothy Ann knew the meaning of John's gospel that your joy may be complete. She knew that life was meant to be joyous, but she

knew how much work that requires. ...In addition to her public roles, she also had personality, countless friends, a quick eye for the individual in need and the person at a loss.”

We hope you will follow along as we explore the many paths that Sr. Dorothy Ann Kelly travelled during her lifetime and invite you to also share your memories of her. We look forward to publishing as many as possible in upcoming installments of “CNR Connections.” She remains in our minds and hearts forever.

As further acknowledgment of her impact and demonstration of our commitment to her memory, the CNR Legacy Alumni Council launched the **Sr. Dorothy Ann Kelly Lifelong Enrichment Series** this past October. Watch for announcements of the next in the series, scheduled for June 10th.

Don't forget – “Never be in a room for longer than 10 minutes without mentioning the College of New Rochelle!”

- Eileen Niedzwiecki SAS '72  
CNR Alumni Communications Committee