



We commend to your charity the soul of our beloved

Sr. Ella Jane Bruen

Who departed this life on September 16, 2026

In the sixtieth year of her religious life

Birthdate: September 19, 1943 Age: 82 years, 11 months and 29 days

It is with sadness and gratitude that we announce the death of our beloved Sister, Ella Jane Bruen, CDP. As we commend her to God's loving embrace, we give thanks for a woman whose life reminds us that Providence delights in creating people who refuse to fit neatly into categories.

Ella Jane was born to Alan F. Bruen and Virginia M. Dee Bruen into the privilege and refinement of Boston's Brahmin society. She knew that world well. She appreciated beautiful things, treasured an original painting by Ted Kennedy, and moved comfortably among people of influence and accomplishment. Those who met her casually sometimes dismissed her as shallow. Those who knew her better discovered a woman of warmth, generosity, humor, and genuine affection for people.

Ella Jane was never stereotypical. She never fit neatly into anyone's expectations of what a Sister of Divine Providence should be. Equally at home in the drawing rooms of Boston's oldest families and around a campfire with children, she combined elegance with approachability, refinement with practicality, and a delightful sense of humor with a deep commitment to the Gospel. She remained unmistakably herself, showing that holiness is found not in fitting a mold but in allowing God to work through the unique gifts of one's own personality.

A graduate of Harvard University, Ella Jane loved history and remained a lifelong reader. She authored *Through Ordinary Eyes: The Civil War Correspondence of Rufus Robin, Private, Seventh Regiment, Massachusetts Volunteers* because she believed the stories of ordinary people deserved to be remembered.

Yet those who knew Ella Jane best would not begin with her education or her book. They would tell you about her friendships. Warm, engaging, and wonderfully social, she had an extraordinary gift for making people feel at home. She loved conversation, laughter, and storytelling. Her stories—often enhanced by a touch of Irish wit and humor—became legendary among those who knew her. Whether every detail was perfectly accurate was beside the point. She delighted in making people laugh, and she did so effortlessly.

That gift for friendship shaped every ministry she embraced. From 1970 until 2007 she ministered at Sacred Heart School, and from 1970 until 2008 she directed Camp Mishannock. She never hesitated to do whatever was needed. Whether teaching, directing camp, or driving the Sacred Heart school bus for daily pickups and excursions throughout Boston's South Shore, she was happiest wherever relationships were being formed.

From 2008 until 2018, Ella Jane continued that ministry of presence at La Roche College as an instructor and resident director. More than any title she held, people remembered the warmth of her welcome, her ready laughter, and her faithful companionship.

Her concern extended well beyond the classroom. Ella Jane became deeply involved with refugees and immigrants, helping families secure housing, furniture, clothing, and the basic necessities of life while advocating for greater justice. She understood that Providence is not simply something we believe but something we embody through generous service.

In one of her own reflections, Ella Jane wrote that the profession ring of a Sister of Divine Providence symbolizes God's unending love and reminds us that our mission is to help others become 'encircled by God's

Provident Love.' Those words describe her life well. She welcomed people into that circle through friendship, hospitality, humor, and quiet acts of kindness.

Predeceased by her beloved sister, Ginger, Ella Jane leaves behind countless friends whose lives were enriched by her presence. We commend her to the Provident God whom she served so faithfully, grateful for the joy she shared, the friendships she cultivated, and the unique witness she offered to our congregation.

May Sister Ella Jane now be welcomed into the fullness of God's Provident Love. May she rest in peace.

Sister Michele Bisbey – Provincial Director