



## Born to New Life

### Sister Angelica Cristiani, MPF



Sister Angelica Cristiani, MPF, passed away peacefully on the morning of January 13, 2025, at St. Joseph Hall, Villa Walsh, Morristown, New Jersey. She was 100 years of age.

Born on April 23, 1924, in Jersey City, New Jersey, Sister Angelica grew up in a loving and faith-filled family. In 1938, Sister Angelica entered the Religious Teachers Filippini, received the habit in 1940 and professed her Perpetual Oblation in 1943.

Having earned a BS degree in Elementary Education from the College of St. Elizabeth in Convent Station, New Jersey, Sister Angelica taught grades one through eight in the (arch)dioceses of Baltimore, Brooklyn, Metuchen, Newark, Philadelphia, and Trenton, and also served as principal and local convent superior. When Sister Angelica retired from teaching, she graciously offered her culinary skills and services at Villa Walsh, St. Joseph by the Sea Retreat House in South Mantoloking, New Jersey, and Villa Victoria in Ewing, New Jersey. In 2014, Sister Angelica transitioned to Villa Walsh where she generously offered her services wherever needed. Due to declining health, Sister Angelica entered St. Joseph Hall in December 2024.

The Most Reverend Arthur J. Serratelli, Bishop Emeritus of Paterson, offered the Mass of Christian Burial on Saturday, January 18, 2025, in Saint Lucy Chapel at Villa Walsh. The Liturgy was concelebrated by Father Ronald Sordillo. Sister Angelica's mortal remains were laid to rest in Ave Maria Cemetery at Villa Walsh.

In his homily, Bishop Serratelli offered these thoughts: *"Everywhere Sister Angelica went, she brought goodness, not of herself, but of the Lord. She chose to enter religious life as a young teenager, because Sister Angelica loved the Lord and wanted to help others love him as well. Teaching in six different dioceses, she was determined to help her students not only progress in their studies, but also in self-discipline and personal formation, especially determined to help them know and love the Lord as she did. As a dedicated religious, living the consecrated life for 87 years, she served the Lord where she was most needed."*

Sister Ascenza Tizzano, General Superior, in her letter of sympathy remarked, *"What a sense of awe surfaces when someone survives a hundred years! Yet, it is not the hundred years that prompt us to honor Sister Angelica today, but how she utilized these blessed years. Today we reverence her legacy because she cooperated with God's grace and responsibly and wisely lived God's gift of time. Through many of these years, Sister Angelica served as a teacher, and also principal, and superior. When retiring from the school setting, she assumed responsibilities in the convent, always very giving, generous, and hard-working. Baking for the Sisters and gift-giving brought her great pleasure and satisfaction. ... Sister Angelica accepted illness and her disabilities courageously. Amazingly, she survived a grave car accident, very determined to heal and to do whatever was necessary for her to regain strength and resume her responsibilities. Further, she endured serious heart surgeries. While her doctors exhibited more concern regarding her recovery, she bravely healed at St. Joseph Hall with one repeated concern, 'When can I return to Villa Victoria?' ... Sister Angelica was nourished through her fidelity to prayer, which energized and sustained her in all these challenging situations. In her last years spent at Villa Walsh, she was very present in following the community's daily schedule. When Sister Angelica could no longer work so ambitiously, and with declined eyesight, her prayer and her courage surfaced even more intensely. Each day, walker and all, she was a steady presence at the noonday rosary. Sister Angelica's simple yet intense love for Our Lady, Saint Lucy, and her strong perseverant spirit and love of Community were exemplary. We are enriched by this memory she leaves with us. ... Rest in peace, dear Sister!"*