

Sr Mary Josephine Gallagher rsj.

Born Mary Monica Gallagher on the 20th October, 1914 to miner wheelwright Peter Gallagher and his wife Mary Garaty who died giving birth to their only child. Mary was raised lovingly by the Lavery family who always treated her as their own and with whom she forged close family ties. On the 12th June, 1931, Mary entered the novitiate at Lochinvar and took the name, Sr Mary Josephine of Our Lady of the Sacred Heart. Profession followed on the 3rd January, 1934 and then began a long and distinguished life of service in the ministry of music and pastoral care.

Sister Josephine gained her A. Mus.A and L.Mus.A. and while teaching music at Lochinvar, won a scholarship to the London Conservatorium. She excelled in music teaching and many fine musicians thank her for the grounding she gave them. Above all, Josephine cherished her gift for playing the piano and organ and was always happy to use it for the benefit of the parishes and for any organization that needed an accomplished accompanist. Sr Josephine formed lasting friendships with the people of the parishes in which she served and many of them kept in touch with her till her last days.

In her later years, it was a joy to her to share music with the aged and infirm as she realized how much a sing song lifted up the heart. As her own age increased, Josephine retired first to Swansea and then to the Holy Family apartments at Lochinvar where she was at home till 2009 when she needed the extra care provided at St Joseph's Sandgate. She increasingly spoke of her desire to go to heaven and her wish was granted on Monday evening , 22nd August about 9.30p.m.

Our thanks go to all those who lovingly cared for Josephine in her last days – particularly the staff at St Joseph's Home, Sandgate. Eternal rest grant to her O Lord, and let perpetual light shine upon her.

