



Sisters of St. Casimir

2601 West Marquette Road • Chicago, IL 60629-1817
www.sistersofstcasimir.org

Sister M. Elaine Kuizinas, SSC

October 11, 1926 — November 10, 2023



Sister M. Elaine (Mary Kuizinas) was born October 11, 1926, to Joseph and Anna (Kaleskas) Kuizinas in Worcester, MA. Mary, the fifth of six children, received her education in Worcester at St. Casimir School and graduated from Classical High School in 1944. She worked and attended Salter Secretarial School before entering the Sisters of St. Casimir in Chicago as a postulant on her 18th birthday.

The Sisters of St. Casimir, who taught her at St. Casimir School, inspired Mary to become a Sister and embark on this next part of her life journey. After arriving in Chicago, she began her preparation taking the name Sister M. Elaine at her reception, making her first vows as a Sister of St. Casimir on August 15, 1947 and her final vows on August 15, 1952.

In 1947, Sister Elaine began her life of ministry and service within the church as an educator. For fifteen years she taught kindergarten through seventh grades in the following schools: Nativity BVM (Chicago, IL), Sacred Heart (New Philadelphia, PA), St. John (Roswell, NM), St. Alphonsus (Baltimore, MD), St. George (Shenandoah, PA), St. Anthony (Cicero, IL).

In 1962 she began ministering in high schools, teaching mathematics at Maria High School (Chicago, IL) for nineteen years, and then becoming Principal of Villa Joseph Marie (Holland, PA) for the next nineteen years. Sister Elaine was much loved and respected in all the ministries as testimonies from her many students and colleagues attested to in writing and in person as she completed her years as Villa Principal in 2001, as an inductee to the VJM Wall of Fame in 1996, and during her 75th jubilee celebration in August 2022.

As the Villa bid a fond farewell to Sister Elaine in 2001, among the reflections written about her include: "While maintaining the family spirit of the school and its focus on Catholic values, Sister Elaine provided the encouragement and support that enabled Villa to make advances in academics and athletics. Under her leadership the first advanced courses were offered, eventually leading to advanced placement courses in English, foreign languages, and the sciences. The Villa sports teams have also grown and achieved great things over the past 19 years, including league, district, and state championships in basketball, cross country, lacrosse, soccer, softball, and track. Under her leadership, Villa achieved the Blue Ribbon School of Excellence status in 1996. These and other achievements contributed to a steady increase in enrollment during her tenure."

"Perhaps most significantly, Sister Elaine supported the establishment of VJM's first Board of Directors in 1991. Comprised of lay members and Sisters of St. Casimir, the Board has worked with Sister Elaine to shepherd the school through the challenges and opportunities of the past decade, positioning the school for a very bright future."

Sister Elaine earned a BS in Education from Marywood College (Scranton, PA) and an MS in Mathematics from De Paul University (Chicago, IL). Coupled with her life experiences, she was well prepared for all her ministries. Being a life-long learner and the desire to excel at teaching, she served on several North Central Evaluation Committees, and was an integral part of the "New Math" program for the University of Illinois Committee on School Mathematics. She studied under the developers and authors of the program to ensure its success at Maria HS. After having received National Science Foundation Grants to study at Illinois Institute of Technology (Chicago, IL), DePaul University (Chicago, IL), and the University of Illinois (Urbana-Champaign, IL) during the summers of 1966-1970, she was employed as an assistant professor, instructing teachers, at Western Washington University (Bellingham, WA) during the 1971-1973 summer institutes.

After 19 successful and wonderful years as principal of Villa Joseph Marie, Sister Elaine returned to Chicago in 2001. In 2003 she was elected General Secretary and General Councilor for the Congregation, serving until 2008. While on the Council, she also enjoyed working at Holy Cross Hospital from 2002-2014.

Sister Elaine truly appreciated the beauty and magnificence of nature, especially mountains. She was blessed to have had travel adventures in 34 states, Canada, Europe, South America, Australia, Fiji, New Zealand, and a special experience in the Holy Land. She enjoyed the four seasons each for its own natural charm but favored autumn the most.

Sister Elaine was entertained by many sporting events but liked football the best. She was a loyal follower of Notre Dame, the Patriots, and the Red Sox. During the last decade the Patriots were replaced by the Bears and White replaced Red for the sox. She was known as the Villa's greatest cheerleader as she learned the rules of soccer and lacrosse while attending many games. She was also an outstanding and clever pinochle player.

In 2015, Sister Elaine moved to Franciscan Village in Lemont, IL where she provided a ministry of prayer and presence for the Sisters and residents there until her death.



Sister Elaine was preceded in death by her father, Joseph Kuizinas, mother, Anna (Kaleskas) Kuizinas. Her siblings, Anne Ternosky, Frances Alonis, Joseph Kuizinas, Charles Kuizinas, and Pauline Huhn also preceded her in death. Sister M. Elaine Kuizinas is survived by a brother-in-law Bill Huhn, many nieces, nephews, grandnieces, grandnephews, great-grandnieces, and great-grandnephews. She is also survived by the Sisters of St. Casimir.

Deceased members of Sister M. Elaine's Profession Class:
Sister M. Georgine Cizauskas
Sister M. Rosita Poplosky
Sister M. Jeanette Uzdavinis

Visitation and Wake Service: Saturday, November 18, 2023, 10:30 to 11:30 a.m.
Franciscan Village Chapel
1270 Village Drive
Lemont, IL 60439

Mass of the Resurrection: Saturday, November 18, 2023, 11:30 a.m.
Franciscan Village Chapel
Celebrant: Father Robert Rizzo
Organist: Gia Martin
Flutist: Anna Belle O'Shea

Mass livestream link: <https://www.asimplestreaming.com/smekuizinas>

Interment: Saint Casimir Cemetery
Funeral Director: Lack & Sons Funeral Home
708-430-5700



Sharing a special moment with her brother Joe in New Zealand, 1981.



September 3, 2021, Sister Elaine gets the "Grand Pinochle" ending the game in a victory.



The reward for a day of fishing with her brother Charlie, 1976.



Accepting the Blue Ribbon certificate for Villa Joseph Marie High School, 1996.



Denali, Alaska, 2004



Supporting a Maria High School Sports team after a first-place win, 1967

