

## Muriel Gallagher, SP (1923-2013)

Born on November 26, 1923 in Yorkton, Saskatchewan, Alice Gallagher is introduced to the Sisters of Providence of St. Vincent de Paul through her older sister Marguerite who entered the congregation in 1942. Alice received her teaching certificate before entering the congregation on August 14, 1943. As a postulant, she taught at St. John's School in Kingston. She made first profession on August 15, 1945 and took the name Sr. Mary Muriel.



She taught in Belleville for a year before attending St. Mary's Hospital School of Nursing in Montreal. After graduating in 1949, she worked as a nurse in Quebec, Ontario, and Alberta. She earned her Bachelor of Science in Nursing Education from the University of Ottawa in 1959 and a Masters of Arts in Social Psychology, from the Catholic University of America in 1969. From 1955 to 1969, she taught at the Schools of Nursing of St. Mary's Hospital in Montreal and Providence Hospital in Moose Jaw, Saskatchewan.

Sister Muriel returned to Kingston in 1970 where she served as Director of Nursing at St. Mary's of the Lake Hospital from 1970 to 1972, as a General Councillor of the congregation from 1972 to 1977 and as General Superior from 1977 to 1985.

Sr. Muriel's vision of health ministry was holistic and went beyond the institutional setting. As General Councillor and General Superior she was involved in the congregation's establishment of five group homes, including a group home for girls in Kingston in 1973 of which she was the first director from 1973 to 1976, and Gabriel Maternity Home in Kingston in 1982 for unwed mothers of which she was director in 1986. She was also involved in lay social service institutions, including helping to found a women's shelter and a social housing support group.

From 1987 to 1998 she played a key role in the Sisters of Providence health care ministry, first as Director of the Providence Health Care Team and then in 1989 as President of Providence Health System which comprised eight health care institutions. In 1993, the Catholic Health Association of Canada presented Sr. Muriel with its Performance Citation Award for her work in health care.

She was a strong advocate for social justice issues. She died on June 8, 2013 in Kingston.

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