

Sister Alphonse Louise Gendron, OP

“So in Christ we, though many, form one body,
and each member belongs to all the others.”

- Romans 12:5

On the morning of November 20, 2023, our dear Sister Alphonse Louise Gendron was called into eternal life by the God she had loved and served for 75 years as a Dominican sister of Amityville.



Louise and Alphonse Gendron welcomed their baby girl Helen on February 6, 1930. She joined her older siblings John, Ray, and Yvonne and was nicknamed Babe. After her elementary education at P.S. 140 in Queens, Helen attended Dominican Commercial High School where she met the Dominican sisters.

After graduation from high school, Helen entered the Amityville Congregation on September 10, 1948. The following August 4th, she and forty-two other young women were clothed with the Dominican habit and began their novitiate year. They were given the Bleeding Heart as their set flower, and Helen was given her religious name - Sister Alphonse Louise.

August 5, 1950 was the day of First Vows for Sister Alphonse Louise and her set. The following month these eager young women were sent on their first assignments and began their journeys as professed religious women.

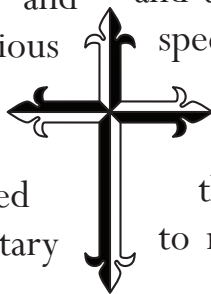
Sister Alphonse Louise went to St. Joseph in Long Island City and dedicated thirty-three years to teaching in elementary

schools in Queens, Nassau, and Suffolk counties. During that time, she attended Molloy College and spent weekends working with children with special needs. This background gave Alphonse the experience to begin an Exceptional Children's Program at her next assignment in St. Ignatius School in Hicksville. The school collected money for Jerry Lewis' Labor Day Telethon, and Sister Alphonse Louise and two of her students presented the donation on T.V.

In addition to ministering in elementary schools, this hardworking Dominican sister spent a number of years in St. John the Baptist Diocesan High School, Queen of the Rosary Academy, and Kellenberg Memorial High School teaching and then working in the library.

When Alphonse lived in John XXIII, she reactivated a Volunteer Program in the Motherhouse. One of the sisters recalled a wonderful variety show that Alphonse organized. It involved about 70 sisters and staff members. It was a very spirit-filled and uplifting event. Alphonse arranged for a special Thank You Mass and dinner for all the volunteers.

In 1995, Alphonse moved to Queen of the Rosary Motherhouse. She continued to minister in a variety of ways including



Sister Alphonse Louise Gendron, OP

taking charge of the mailroom, helping in the Advancement Office, and volunteering in the Opening Word Program for women who wanted to learn English. She often collected donations for the poor and for those who had experienced a serious, unfortunate event. In addition, prior to Christmas, Alphonse arranged for sisters and staff to be able to honor a loved one by giving money for a poinsettia plant that was then placed around the Nativity set in chapel.

For years our dear sister decorated the main dining room in Amityville on special holy days with a picture and prayer commemorating the feast. On national holidays her patriotic spirit was especially evident with red, white, and blue decorations and flags on each table. Her niece, Michelle, who stayed with her during her final days, said that her Aunt Helen's favorite song was God Bless America, and she wore her flag pin with great pride.

Our Sister Alphonse Louise had great devotion to St. Joseph and prayed to him especially for veterans and our country. Her attendance at daily mass, even on days when it was evident that she was in pain, was an inspiration to many. Last month she participated in the annual Motherhouse retreat. Alphonse told people that she planned to live until she died.

This brave, prayerful, patriotic, and compassionate woman of God will be missed by many nieces, nephews, grandnieces and grandnephews, cousins, friends, and her Dominican sisters.

The funeral will take place on Monday, November 27, 2023. Visitation will begin at 9:45 AM in St. Albert Chapel in the Motherhouse. At 10:15 AM there will be a Prayer Service. The Mass of Christian Burial will occur immediately after the Prayer Service. Interment will follow in our St. Dominic Cemetery on the Motherhouse grounds.
