

175 SISTER PROFILES: Sister Elaine Nolan

Sister Anne Power



Although Sister Elaine Nolan, resident artist at Wellesley, was born into a family of accomplished musicians, her artistic persuasion was undoubtedly inherited from her father who was a stained-glass window designer. The creative process behind his work emanated from the emotion embedded in his dedication and commitment. These gifts are what fascinated S. Elaine as her father would bring home shards of colored glass.



This stained glass window was designed with cellophane pieces and black ink by Neil Nolan, S. Elaine's father. He displayed it with back lighting in his dining room window where it was visible to passers by.

Fast forward to the Wellesley campus where S. Elaine, now an accomplished artist, shares her talents in many and varied ways.



CELEBRATING

175

YEARS OF JOYFUL WITNESS

1849 - 2024

When the Chaplain at Marillac needed photos for funeral booklets of the deceased Sisters, S. Elaine offered her gifts.

Consequently, many mourners have found consolation and solace because of the sensitive beauty of her photographs.

This is S. Elaine's personal credo:

Designing funeral covers is a privilege. The process is the same each time: I think a lot about the person, her personality, her strong points. I go through various Scripture quotes and check the Constitutions. Inevitably, a line from one of those sources will strike me and I will know it is the right one. Once that decision is made, I search through photographs that I have taken over the past few years. I save them in folders on my computer with headings such as: oceans, sunsets, flowers, etc. Sometimes I look through dozens and dozens before one strikes me. There are times when it is very difficult, especially when I have two or three that I like. Then I have to zero in on just the right one. I also give some consideration to the shape of the photo and its bordering color.

My motivation for the process lies in the realization that this is the last thing I can do for this person, and I want it to be perfect. I want the finished product to reflect her and to enhance and complement the celebration of her life.

*In every age, O God,
You have been our refuge.
-Psalm 90*



Mt. St. Vincent, Wellesley

Prayer Service

Sister Margaret White, SC

October 10, 1930 – March 30, 2023

**A booklet cover for
S. Margaret White's
funeral celebration.**



Sisters Marianne Howell, Joan Meeks, Miriam Helm and Mary Harrington in art class creating masterpieces

When called on to teach art to the Sisters at Marillac, S. Elaine responded. Consequently, if you walked through Madonna Hall on a Wednesday afternoon, you would hear laughter and jovial remarks as the artist Sisters critiqued each other’s works.

S. Elaine’s Christmas workshop is also a fun experience and the wreaths spread a true spirit of the season and add to the decorations around the house.

Holiday cards are another contribution of S. Elaine, and the Dew Drop Inn is always crowded when any of S. Elaine’s seasonal cards are there. You have to be early to be able to purchase one!



Christmas was in the air as Sisters created tissue paper wreathes.

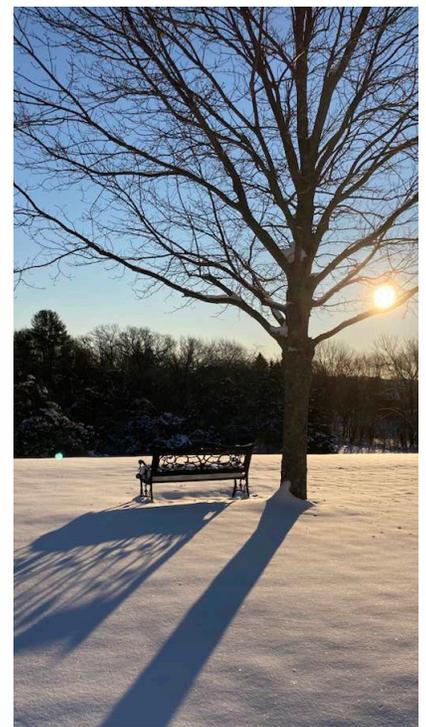


The work S. Elaine has offered the community does not stop at Wellesley. She has also answered the calls of various Chapter and Assembly Coordinators. One in particular is the beautiful illustration of the growth of a seed based on the Scripture: “Unless a grain of wheat falls into

the ground and dies, it remains a seed; but if it dies, it brings forth much fruit.” S. Elaine developed a series of paintings depicting many stages of the development and disintegration of a wheat seed to express how seeds multiply and spread over the earth. The last painting shows the world covered with swirling seeds—the Word of God spreading throughout the world. These pictures now hang on the second floor of Marillac.

Among the many photos of flora and fauna, S. Elaine has captured the beauty at Wellesley at sunrise and sunset, in the snow and throughout all the seasons. Her works have motivated some, influenced and inspired still others, and impressed us all.

We are happy to have S. Elaine as our in-house artist and are grateful for all she does—thank you S. Elaine!



**The grounds of
Mount Saint Vincent,
Wellesley**