

Maureen Cora (Sister Bernadine) Kelly

Maureen Cora Kelly, the second of seven children born to Mary Frances (Molly) Ganly (1916-1992) and Bernard Thomas Kelly (1916-1980), was born in 1944. She is one of the many great great grandchildren of Patrick Carrucan and Mary O'Brien.

Maureen was born at Mentone. Her family home was set on 20 acres, a bush property at Heatherton (opposite the Kingston Heath Golf Club) where her father Bernard, a market gardener, grew a variety of vegetables in season. Patches of potatoes, and lines of carrots and parsnips and rows of cabbage and lettuce were harvested and then sold from the back of the truck at the old "Vic Market" and later from the new Footscray Market when it opened in the 1970s.

From her earliest days she learnt of the importance of water as the sprinklers would stop or dribble making a hole in the vegies.

Maureen attended St. Patrick's Primary School in Mentone and then Kilbreda College (a Brigidine Secondary College). At 17 year of age, she entered the Brigidine Novitiate at Malvern. In 1961 she was received as a Brigidine nun and in 1963, she took her First Profession, taking the name of Sister Bernadine (because of all the Bernard's in her Kelly lineage).



This photo shows Maureen with her godfather/uncle Malachi Ganly and his wife Ann on the occasion of her reception as a Brigidine nun in 1961.

Over many years, she shared her deep and abiding love of nature and music with all the children she taught in every Diocese in Victoria.

Since completing fulltime teaching, Sr. Bernadine has studied Ecology, joined Landcare, tested water tables, taught environmental lessons in many Primary schools and worked at the Stanhope and Elmore Field Days with Landcare.

She currently lives in the Echuca Community and is heavily involved on the local front. Groups to benefit from her energy and vitality include Parish Council, a Guitar Group at Mass, Celtic Choir and leader in the Passionist Family Group. She is also involved in "Friends of East Timor" and in her Parish Justice group which involves fundraising and awareness raising

Never one to pass up on an opportunity, she also joined the Echuca-Moama Celtic Festival Committee and helps with the Ecumenical Services and mini-pilgrimages.

Sr. Bernadine was also a member of the STG (Sustainability Task Group) for the Brigidine Province, working on ways to help the Order adopt a culture of caring for the Earth, mainly through solar power and hot water, water tanks and recycling of white goods.

Never one to sit back and stop learning, she recently attended 3 wonderful Spiritual environmental week-ends in the beautiful surrounds at Balnarring, Glenburn, and a Symposium on Astronomy. She has also taken Parishioners to Glenburn to be inspired to spiritual action for God's world.

Sr. Bernadine is one of the leading lights in the Carrucan Genealogical group and is heavily involved in our new book venture. Like all her other activities, she brings boundless enthusiasm and joy into this work and constantly inspires us to greater heights.

Tim Erickson

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