

Resolution of Council

17 February 2025

Item 3.1

Vale Sister Margaret Gooley

Minute by the Lord Mayor

To Council:

I wish to inform Council of the passing of Sister Margaret Gooley on 19 January 2025.

Born 28 August 1929, Margaret was the beloved daughter of James and Alice (née Eves) Gooley and the sister of Allan, James, William, Vincent, Anthony and Therese.

Raised in Leichhardt, Margaret joined the Sisters of St Joseph of the Sacred Heart at age 17.

In the late 1980s, Sister Margaret and her fellow Sister Teresa Noon moved to Ultimo, living at St Joseph's House on Bulwara Road.

At that time, the congregation at nearby St Bedes in Pyrmont was very small, and the church did not have its own priest. Sister Margaret and Sister Teresa conducted the services, welcoming everyone and exercising some of the pastoral duties, including delivering communion.

For more than 30 years they cared for the lonely, isolated and marginalised, without judgement. They provided support for isolated, unwell and lonely people in Pyrmont and Ultimo through regular visits and material, spiritual and emotional support. They were the eyes and ears of the community, watching over those in need. Their home was a place of welcome to everyone.

Sister Margaret was also renowned for her work with prisoners from Parramatta and Long Bay Gaols, who she wrote to, visited, brought books for and comforted in times of grief, at times waiting outside the gaol for hours, sometimes in the rain.

The Sisters were also generous to a fault, often giving away what little they had to those who needed it more, including people experiencing homelessness.

Seeing how selfless the Sisters were, the Ultimo community organised a weekly raffle at the Lord Wolseley Hotel every Friday night. Money raised through the raffle was given to the Sisters to help local people in need and support other important causes, including sending support for the people of East Timor during the crisis of the late 1990s.

In 2009, as member for Bligh, I nominated Sisters Margaret and Teresa for the Sydney Electorate Women of the Year in recognition of their 25 years of service to the community. A few years later they moved to Croydon, and then to Hunters Hill to live.

Family and friends gathered on 28 January 2025 to celebrate Sister Margaret at St Joseph's in Baulkham Hills. Sister Margaret was much loved and respected by the Ultimo and Pyrmont communities. She will be dearly missed by locals and her family including her surviving sister, Therese Roach, and nephew Michael Gooley and her many other nephews and nieces.

COUNCILLOR CLOVER MOORE AO

Lord Mayor

Moved by the Chair (the Lord Mayor) –

It is resolved that:

- (A) all persons attending this meeting of Council observe one minute's silence to commemorate the life of Sister Margaret Gooley and her contribution to the Ultimo and Pyrmont communities;
- (B) Council express its condolences to Sister Margaret's family and many friends and the Ultimo and Pyrmont community; and
- (C) the Lord Mayor convey Council's condolences to Sister Margaret Gooley's sister, Therese Roach, her nephew Michael Gooley, her many other nephews and nieces, and the Sisters of Saint Joseph of the Sacred Heart.

Carried unanimously.

S051491

Note – All Councillors, staff and members of the public present stood in silence for one minute as a mark of respect to Sister Margaret Gooley.