

Moira Jeanne O'BRIEN DOYLE



Moira Jeanne O'Brien was born in a snowstorm on May 29, 1947 at the Greene County Hospital near Jefferson, Iowa. That first year she was voted the prettiest baby in Greene County.

Jeanne was baptized and confirmed at St. Joseph Catholic Church in Jefferson. Jefferson is the county seat, a town of family and friends she loved to visit and talk about her entire life. It was a safe harbor of fond memories.

At Jefferson High School, she twirled the baton, stepped high and was the majorette leading the school band her senior year of 1965. Tall, blond and blue-eyed, she loved music, dancing and the weather. She was funny and she was fun loving, and her light-hearted ways won her the nickname "Flake."

Growing up, she was Jeanne. When she arrived at Clarke in 1965, she smiled, shook hands and said, "I'm Moira." Clarke was a land of change and surprise: the new friends who became life-long friends, the experiences she treasured and never forgot, and the doors that opened to new beginnings. Moira loved the sights and sounds of Clarke and Dubuque, and she spun and laughed with the words that flew off the pages and around her head. Her joys were the poetry of a life lived and the written pages that held its images.

In 1969, Moira graduated with a degree in English, moved to Chicago for work, married Jim Doyle, and moved back to Iowa. Much happened through the following years. She left Iowa for Texas and life under the wide skies with husband and two sons, James and Patrick. They were good, long, full, happy years, growing with new memories and cherished friends. Each year, family trips brought them back to Iowa where they drove the streets of Jefferson listening to her stories and walked the hills of Dubuque hearing her laugh.

On December 7, 2000, Moira was diagnosed with a brain tumor. The surgeon explained the cancer probably started in high school and only recently began to grow again. Despite the treatments, surgeries and hospitals, the years were good, long, full and happy. Through it all, Moira grew closer to God and those around her. That final day she laughed at my silly jokes and smiled a knowing smile. That night, October 5, 2005, Moira Jeanne O'Brien Doyle went home to Jesus.

She was a Clarke girl. She was when I met her, and she was when she left. I never forget that first dark Dubuque night. I can see myself walking into Mary Benedict Hall, asking at the desk to call Moira's floor, and wondering if she would come down. She was a Clarke girl. She was, and she always will be.

i thank You God for most this amazing
day: for the leaping greenly spirits of trees
and a blue true dream of sky; and for everything
which is natural which is infinite which is yes

(i who have died am alive again today,
and this is the sun's birthday; this is the birth
day of life and of love and wings: and of the gay
great happening illimitably earth)

how should tasting touching hearing seeing
breathing any—lifted from the no
of all nothing—human merely being
doubt unimaginable You?

(now the ears of my ears awake and
now the eyes of my eyes are opened)

- E.E. Cummings

The Poem by E.E. Cummings numbered 65 in his work "XAIPE" This poem was a favorite of Moira's. She memorized it at Clarke and recited it with her morning prayers.

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SCHOLARSHIP

James Doyle created the Moira Jeanne O'Brien Doyle Scholarship to honor his deceased wife and a Clarke alum, Moira (O'Brien) Doyle, '69. Jim and Moira believed wholly in the mission of Clarke and its desire to provide Catholic education to students. Jim continues to stay connected with Clarke and shared that "each year I make a gift to the scholarship I know Ms. Moira is smiling down on me." The scholarship acknowledges a student who has an appreciation of English and Literature as it was what Moira studied at Clarke.

Eligibility Requirements

- Student must be an incoming freshman with average or above-average grades in high school
- Student displays a serious desire to complete their education
- Student possesses a reputation and character that would be a credit to Clarke
- Student demonstrates an appreciation of English and Literature
- Financial need may be considered

Award Information

The Moira Jeanne O'Brien Doyle Scholarship is \$4,000/year and is renewable for four years based on the students' academic performance and continuous enrollment as a full-time undergraduate for a total of \$16,000.

Application Process

An application will be obtained from admissions. A short essay, no more than 500 words will need to be submitted with the application, describing how words, writing or reading have been important or meaningful in your life and how you hope Clarke will help your interest grow in these areas.

Application Deadline: Application review will begin on February 1, 2020. Later submissions may be accepted if a qualified candidate is not selected.

Contact admissions@clarke.edu with questions.