

A Team Player: The Story of Sr. Clement Eagan

Already an accomplished classical languages scholar who taught and modernized Latin works for contemporary readers, Sr. Clement Eagan served as the Academic Dean of Incarnate Word College for over forty years.

She was also a diehard Dallas Cowboys fan.

Like her beloved Cowboys, who entered the NFL as its first expansion team of the sixties, Sr. Clement focused on expanding Incarnate Word College and raising its competitive edge for students. While maintaining the values of a traditional liberal arts education, she spearheaded new graduate professional coeducation programs. Under the visionary college president, Sr. Columkille, who expanded programs and campus facilities, Sr. Clement helped recruit talented Sisters to the faculty and organized a playbook for curriculum that met the changing requirements of accreditation agencies, ensuring Incarnate Word students received fully recognized degrees that made them competitive in the workforce.

Like Tom Landry's winless first NFL season, Sr. Clement's earliest pursuits to build Incarnate Word College into something great faced tough hurdles. But she persevered, finding fellowships and assistantships for students, aiding with applications, coaching scholars and teachers on how to nab grants, and providing them with career opportunities they hadn't thought possible. They called her "The Wonder."

Like her beloved Roger Staubach and "Bullet" Bob Hayes, Sr. Clement didn't let up off the field either. Outside of her duties as an administrator and educator, she updated Sr. Helena Finck's chronicle of the College's history, laying the crucial groundwork for Sr. Margaret Patrice Slattery's important two-volume work. She also pushed for expansion of honors societies, kept up communication with alumni, and—in what should be no surprise from a sports fan—came up with the idea for the college's first school colors: red and gray.

Whenever the Cowboys lost a game, Sr. Clement used to say, "I just didn't pray hard enough." But by 1972, the Cowboys had their first Super Bowl win, going on to form one of the NFL's great dynasties. Whether or not Sr. Clement's prayers had anything to do with that might remain up for debate, but one thing is certain: she was one of our college's most valuable players, and UIW continues to this day to benefit from her hard work and unwavering faith.