



Mary Ely SL

January 22, 1913 — April 24, 2008

Mary Alice Ely, born January 22, 1913, was the only daughter of Edward Ely and Laura Kerns who also had five sons. She was born on the Nebraska farm where her grandfather had homesteaded.

The first two years of her elementary education took place in a one-room schoolhouse near Auburn, Nebraska. The family then moved into town and Mary Alice was taught by Sisters of Loretto when she attended St. Joseph's School through her sophomore year. There being no higher Catholic schooling available nearby, Mary Alice attended Loretto Academy in Kansas City to complete her high school education. "I was a boarder, and I just loved it! I always loved school and I always wanted to be a teacher. My family just loved those Sisters. I was a very close friend of Sister Philomene, and I wanted to go to the novitiate after graduation, but my father said I was too young and should wait for two years."

Mary Alice attended Duchesne College in Omaha, Nebraska and then attended Loretto Heights College until she entered the novitiate in 1934.

Towards the end of her second year as a novice, and now known as Sister Edward Mary, she taught at Loretto Station (Loretto Public School) in the town of Loretto, Kentucky just about a mile and a half from the Motherhouse. As she reported, "It was very interesting."

After making first vows on August 15, 1936, Edward Mary set off for her first assignment, Holy Family School in Denver, Colorado, where she taught for seventeen years from grades 3 through high school, mainly secondary math and science. "As a young sister you know you fill in most any hole that's there. I had

many friends in the convent and also with the students and their families. I even attended their fiftieth year graduation from high school, and attend three or four reunions every year." While teaching at Holy Family, Mary earned her A.B. degree in Math with minors in Science and English from Loretto Heights College in 1940. It was during this time that Mary taught Marty Lally's parents in third grade as well as high school science.

From 1953-1955 Mary taught chemistry at Nerinx Hall and then spent eight years at DeAndreis where she taught biology, physics and a "good bit of math." During her years in St. Louis, she earned her Masters in Education, from St. Louis University.

Her next assignment was St. Augustine High in the small town of Lebanon, Kentucky where she served as principal for six years. Then off to Loretto Academy in Kansas City which had just moved to its new location. She said: "While we know girls' schools have their advantages, I guess, I was always a little more at home with the co-ed schools."

During the 1960s into the early 70s, Mary received several summer education grants from the National Science Foundation to update her education in various subjects. These grants also enabled her to travel to various parts of the U.S. Using a travel fund from her parents, Mary visited every continent over the years!

Mary became a student at the University of Denver in 1972. In 1973 she taught science at St. Vincent de Paul, where she remained until 1984. Then she tutored at Rhodes Center in Littleton through 2001.

Mary continued living at Loretto Center in Littleton until June of 2006 when she moved to the Loretto Motherhouse Infirmary. She died on April 24, 2008.

Mary sums up in her autobiography of 1976 — "My entire life has been teaching, which I sincerely love and hope to continue so long as I can benefit students. The Religious Life, education and travel providing a rich background for classroom work have been deeply appreciated."

Mary, we will miss your sharp mind which helped many of us remember people and events long past. God bless you!