



**Matthew Geraghty SL**  
**December 4, 1916 – November 22, 2011**

Matthew must have been born with an adventure gene. Growing up in Queens, New York, far from any Loretto connections, she was enthralled at a very early age with foreign missions. An avid reader of *Far East* magazine, Matthew notes in her autobiography: "The work of the Sisters of Loretto was featured in *Far East* from time to time. When I was a junior in high school, I wrote to *Far East* for the address of Loretto Motherhouse. They sent me Mother Olivette's name and I corresponded with her until I entered the novitiate. She made it clear to me that entering the novitiate was no assurance that I would go to China, but I thought if it was God's will, I would go."

Entering Loretto in 1937 her first two assignments were not typical Loretto spots - Pawhuska, Oklahoma, serving Osage children, and Toronto, Ohio.

In 1946 Matthew volunteered to go to China and her long-time dream came true – Matthew and Carlos Marie were off to the missions. The Communists took over China and in January 1949 Matthew returned to the U.S. with Rose Genevieve on the last ship used to evacuate American Marines and missionaries from China. She then taught in several Loretto schools until 1962.

And then in 1963 Matthew and Jean Kelley were on a freighter bound for South America and Tacna, Peru for Matthew. Again from her autobiography: "It was great fun stopping at all the ports along the way...After four weeks we arrived in Ica, Peru...our first real chance to speak Spanish. I didn't do well at all." We can all imagine that her Spanish quickly improved, and she stayed in Peru for six years. Jean remembers her as always eager to get out and explore at each port. Never timid or cautious, she was ready for a new adventure in each new place.

On her return she could continue her teaching, using her Spanish at St. Joseph school in El Paso and then moving to several other Loretto schools until finishing her teaching career at the Loretto Learning Center in St. Louis.

Matthew retired to Loretto Motherhouse in 1992. Who would have ever imagined that she would be able to fulfill her dreams as a missionary by joining Loretto, not a missionary order? She is remembered as a person with a great laugh and a twinkle in her eye always ready to help and to share her opinion on a variety of subjects. What could be better than that? God bless you, Matthew!