



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Sister Mary Corda Mullenix, SSND
Nov. 19, 1926 – Nov. 16, 2017



BALTIMORE - Sister Mary Corda Mullenix died at Meritus Medical Center, Hagerstown on Nov. 16, 2017, three days before her 91st birthday. She was a vowed member of the School Sister of Notre Dame for 70 years and an educator in Pennsylvania and Maryland for 60 years.

The first and only daughter of Charles and Helen Gossard Mullenix was born on November 19, 1926 in Hagerstown, Md. Her baptismal name was Margaret Louise, but she was known as Peggy. Two boys, Edward and James, soon “joined this happy family circle,” Peggy wrote in her autobiography.

Peggy’s early life was centered in St. Mary’s parish in Hagerstown. She was baptized in St. Mary’s Church on November 28, 1926 and there she made her first Holy Communion in May, 1934 and was confirmed by Archbishop Michael Curley in May 1939.

Peggy began the first grade at St. Mary’s School in September 1932, where she was taught by the School Sisters of Notre Dame. As a seventh grader, she happened to be at the Notre Dame Motherhouse in Baltimore and noticed a few girls in long dresses. Learning that they were preparing to become Sisters, she “was so impressed by their manner and behavior that when I went home I immediately announced to my mother that I was going to become a sister.”

After graduation from the eighth grade in 1940, Peggy continued her education at St. Mary’s High School. She graduated from St. Mary’s on June 11, 1944 and marked another important day in her life on August 28, 1944 when she received the candidate’s bonnet in St. Mary’s Church.

During the two years of candidature, Peggy attended the Teacher Training School. She was received into the novitiate on July 16, 1946 and was given the name Sister Mary Corda. Sister Corda professed her first vows on July 31, 1947. She was sent to teach third grade at St. Mary’s School, Malden, Mass. (1947-1953).

Sister Corda became the teacher of grade six when she went to St. Boniface School, Philadelphia, (1953-57), then taught seventh grade at Most Holy Name School, Pittsburgh, (1957-65) and eighth grade at St. Brigid School, Baltimore, (1965-66). She began teaching high school classes at Madonna Academy, West Hollywood, Fla. (1966-70), and later at St. John Literary Institute, Frederick, Md. (1970-72), Archbishop Keough High School (1972-74) and St. Maria Goretti High School, Hagerstown, Md. (1974-87). Returning to her alma mater, St. Mary's School, Hagerstown, Sister Corda taught junior high classes and worked as a media assistant until her retirement in 2007.

Sister Corda earned her advanced education at the College of Notre Dame of Maryland (now University) receiving a Bachelor of Science degree with a major in Education in 1957. She received a Master of Arts in English from Duquesne University, Pittsburgh in 1964.

A strict disciplinarian in the classroom, Sister Cora had the respect and affection of her students for her enthusiastic teaching. One student said in an online tribute that her love of literature was infectious. She was devoted to her students and taught them the strength of simple goodness.

After retirement, Sister Cora helped at the St. Mary's School library and at REACH of Washington County, Md., an organization for emergency aid to homeless families. The director of REACH described Sister Corda as "full of surprises" with a selfless spirit and always a hope for something better for the families she served.

The principal at St. Mary's School in Hagerstown, called Sister Cora "a beautiful witness to the Catholic faith." She was important to the people of Hagerstown who felt blessed by her life and years of dedicated service.

Sister Corda was dedicated to making a difference in the lives of children and on the world around her. She said, "You just try to be as nice as you can. I wanted to do things for other people. I liked to do things for other people. It seemed to me that doing it for God was the best motive possible. As the years went by I knew I had chosen the better part. This is what I was meant to do."

A memorial service was held at St. Mary's Church, Hagerstown on Tues., Nov. 21 with Rev. George Limmer and Rev. Ernest Cibello officiating. A Mass of Christian Burial was celebrated at Villa Assumpta, Baltimore, on Wed., Nov. 22. The Rev. Ernest Cibello was the celebrant. Interment followed at Villa Maria Cemetery, Glen Arm, Md. Sister Corda is survived by nieces and nephews.

Memorial contributions may be made to the School Sisters of Notre Dame, Atlantic Midwest Province, c/o Development Office, 345 Belden Hill Road, Wilton, Conn. 06897 or online: www.amssnd.org

