

SISTER M. ITA KELLY

715

Born: March 6, 1916
Parents: John and Mary Grace Kelly
Postulancy: September 8, 1934
Novitiate: August 12, 1935
First Profession: August 12, 1937
Final Profession: August 12, 1940
Died: October 20, 1993



Ministry:

1937-44 St. Francis Xavier, Chicago, IL, Kindergarten, Grades 1, 2
1944-47 St. Raymond, Joliet, IL, Kindergarten
1947-50 St. Clement, Chicago, IL, Kindergarten
1950-55 St. Pascal, Chicago, IL, Grade 1
1955-57 St. Jude, Cleveland, OH, Grades 1,2
1957-61 St. Mary Magdalene, Columbus, OH, Grade 1
1961-66 Holy Family, Joliet, IL, Grade 1
1966-67 St. Mary, Des Plaines, IL, Grade 1
1967-71 St. Joseph, Freeport, IL, Grade 1
1971-72 St. Mary, Freeport, IL, Grade 1
1972-84 Sts. Peter and Paul, Chicago, IL, Grade 1
1984-93 Jesus Our Brother, Chicago, IL, Grade 1

Wake: Our Lady of Angels, Joliet, IL, Sunday, October 24,
2-7p.m. with prayer service at 4:30 p.m.

Mass of Christian Burial: Sunday, October 24, 7p.m.

Burial: Resurrection Cemetery, Romeoville, IL,
Monday, October 25, 1993
from Our Lady of Angels at 9:30 a.m.

Survived by Sister M. Patrice Kelly, Joliet Franciscan,
St. Matthew Parish, Phoenix, AZ
cousins including Rev. John Grace, St. Tarcissus Parish,
Chicago, IL, and John Kelly, Evergreen Park, IL

*For those who have been faithful, O Lord,
life is not ended, but merely changed.*

Mary Therese Kelly was born in Chicago, Illinois to Mary (Grace) Kelly and John Kelly on March 6, 1916. Together with her sisters, Catherine (later Sister Patrice) and Helen, she was rooted in the richness of the Catholic Faith. All three Kelly girls attended St. Pascal's School in Chicago.

On September 8, 1934, Mary Therese became a postulant with the Sisters of St. Francis in Joliet, where Sister Patrice had already joined the Congregation. Upon reception into the Novitiate on August 12, 1935, Mary Therese was given the name Sister Mary Ita. In 1937, Sister Ita taught her first class at St. Francis Xavier in Chicago. She continued to teach students in the primary grades for the rest of her life, teaching her 35 first graders at Jesus Our Brother School on the day before she died. Sister Ita loved her ministry of teaching. In 1988 she shared these words with Sister Verene Girmscheid, her Councilor Coordinator, "My ministry and living setting have played an important part in my life, because those I have worked with and lived with have shown much understanding, help and sharing." Her needs were as simple as doughnuts and bananas. Her desire to share was strong. Her belief in Catholic education was awe-inspiring. She delighted in marching down the street with balloons to merge three schools forming the new school of Jesus Our Brother.

Sister Ita loved her students and was loved by them. When her students heard Sister Ita was in the hospital they wrote to her and drew her pictures of their love and affection. One of her students summed it up aptly: "She taught us. She loved us. She wanted us to make something of ourselves." Learning became a joy and a challenge through her. Her joys in life outside of her students included her family, her Franciscan Sisters and the school faculty and staff. She loved to celebrate birthdays and to gather with the Sisters at wakes and funerals, as well as professions and jubilees.

Sister Ita was scheduled to have surgery to remove a cancerous growth from the back of her head. In her matter of fact way she convinced Sister Patrice that it would not be necessary for her to come to be with her. Sister Jeanette Willenborg and Melissa Holzworth, our Associate, would be there and she was in the hands of God and of the doctors. Even with the most skillful doctors, Sister Ita did not make it through the surgery, but in her quick and resolute way went on to meet her God on October 20, 1993, to be welcomed by the heavenly bridegroom to whom she had given her life.

Ita's presence among us has certainly made a difference. Her principal, Ann O'Brien, our Associate, expressed her sympathy by saying, "Thank you for the many years Ita was able to minister in the Inner City. She was a wonderful teacher. We are grateful for her presence with us."

Sister Ita, we thank you for your burning desire to make the lives of others better. We ask you, as you enter into the company of Jesus, our Brother and our Teacher, to help us to learn what is really important in this life. Watch over the members of your family, especially your Sister, Patrice, and all of us your Franciscan Sisters and Associates. May God hold you in the hollow of His hand. Amen. Alleluia.

