

Sr. Ellen (Mary Lucy) McNulty, OP – 50 Year Jubilee

Sr. Ellen McNulty, OP, is celebrating the 50th anniversary of her Profession as a Dominican Sister of St. Mary of the Springs, Columbus, Ohio.

Born in Meriden, Connecticut, Sr. Ellen attended St. Mary's High School in New Haven, where she first met the Dominican Sisters. "For a long time, especially during my high-school years, I had the sense that God was calling me," she says. "My parents were supportive, and I wanted to teach. I felt that this could happen in community with the Dominican Sisters."

During Sr. Ellen's senior year, a Dominican Sister on the faculty invited her to consider a religious vocation. "I became interested in becoming more informed, so I decided to attend the College of St. Mary of the Springs (now Ohio Dominican University) in Columbus. After my freshman year, I entered the Novitiate." Later, after Profession, Sister graduated from the College with a BA in art and began her teaching career.

After teaching for two years in elementary schools in Newark and Columbus, Sr. Ellen began to teach high-school math and art. For the next 20 years, she taught at Northwest Catholic in Hartford, Connecticut; St. Mary of the Springs Academy in Columbus; and Newark Catholic in Newark, Ohio. Along the way, Sr. Ellen earned a Master of Fine Arts degree from Catholic University and a Master's in Religion from Fordham University. After teaching art at Albertus Magnus College, she resumed high-school teaching at Catholic Central in Steubenville, Ohio; St. Mary High School in New Haven; and Bishop Watterson High School in Columbus.

After spending a summer month in a House of Prayer with a small community with outreach to parishioners, Sr. Ellen felt called to focus more on the Word of God by assisting adults to fulfill their baptismal call. "I did not retire," she explains. "I began my third career. I wanted to minister to adults, enable them to love Scripture and to share the faith." For 25 years, she served in pastoral ministry in New York and Connecticut, primarily with the homebound and the sick.

"My 50 years of religious life have occurred at a wonderful time in the history of the Church - a time rooted in a long tradition, which gradually evolved into religious life as we know it today. The Dominican Order was appealing because I found that each Sister was a unique individual embracing the Dominican way according to her own unique gifts. We are still shaping our future as we work towards a union of seven Congregations of Dominican women. Although there are risks, it is a very hopeful movement of which I am glad to be a part."

Presently, Sr. Ellen is the pastoral associate at Our Lady of Victory/St. John Vianney Parishes in West Haven, Connecticut. She resides at St. Mary's Convent in New Haven with four other Dominican Sisters.