

# 2014 Jubilee



First Profession  
July 20, 1939

## JUBILEE WISDOM

*It was a great gift  
to be a teacher.*

**-Mary Denis O'Reilly, SSND**

## Mary Denis O'Reilly, SSND

*75 Years*

**S***ister Mary Denis* ministered in education for 68 years, serving as a teacher and principal in elementary schools. Also, for 13 years she taught a course on diagnosing reading problems in children at Mount Mary College, Milwaukee. She served at the following schools: St. Joseph and Holy Cross, Milwaukee and St. John the Baptist, Marshfield in Wisconsin; St. Ambrose, Chicago and St. Benedict, Blue Island in Illinois; and Sacred Heart, Warsaw and St. Mary, Alexandria in Indiana. When she retired in 2006, the parishioners of St. Mary in Alexandria honored her for her 24 years of service to the school. Sister Mary Denis earned a bachelor's degree in education from Mount Mary College in Milwaukee and a master's degree in education from Marquette University in Milwaukee. Since her retirement, she has been serving through volunteer ministries and by her prayer and presence.

**A blessing of these years I want to share is** that it was a great gift to be a teacher, especially a teacher of little children.

**The wisdom I would like to share** is that my love of teaching was a tremendous gift from God.

**From the time I made my first Holy Communion** I wanted to become a sister. I had a special love for Blessed Theresa, SSND foundress and I often prayed to her to help me find the way. I wanted to help children, poor children. During the 10th grade I heard talks about the missions. Though I wanted to be a sister, the thought of leaving my four younger sisters was very hard for me. Eventually, with advice from Sister Raphael and help from my older brother, I prepared to leave my home in Detroit for the SSND candidature at the motherhouse in Milwaukee. I missed my family so much. Sister Rose Ernst was my guardian angel and helped me during this difficult time. My teaching years were always happy for me. I loved being with children. I retired at 88 years of age to Notre Dame of Elm Grove.