

## REFLECTION ON THE LIFE OF SISTER MARY THOMAS RODGERS

November 26, 1924 – March 31, 2024



Who was Sister Mary Thomas? In November 26 she would be 100 years old. How fortunate I was to share some of those years with her. I was happy to live many of those years with her at St. Philip, Crafton. I must say that they were some of my happiest community days with Sister Aninna, Sr. Mary Thomas and we even enjoyed going to Kennywood Park together.

She entered the Sisters of Charity from St. Mary Parish, 46<sup>th</sup> St. in Pittsburgh. In her letter of recommendation from her pastor, he said, “She is a very fine girl and comes from an excellent Catholic family.” Her ability to adapt herself to circumstances, to recognize authority, and maintain a reserve in a crowd will stand her good in training for the religious life....That sounds like the Sr. Mary Thomas that we knew and loved!

For years Sister Mary Thomas valued her life as a teacher, but she said, it was more about living the virtues, knowing and spreading the Kingdom of God

in our time and in our culture.

Her second grade students certainly benefited from her loving and caring presence in the classroom. Her memory lingers on in the students that she taught as so many give testimony to her love for them as they loved her.

Not only did the students benefit from her loving attention, but she helped the teachers to adapt the curriculum at St. Philip School so that students with special needs could succeed....One student saw her obituary and was saddened by her death. She remembered her as a kind person who was so good to all the children that she taught. She felt that Sister was a cheerleader for all of the students. She herself had disabilities and Sister was so patient with her. Because of Sister Mary Thomas she grew to be a compassionate person and used it into her career of security work.

Those who lived with Sister Mary Thomas remember her as the quiet heart of St. Philip School, her most adorable laugh, and gentle smile, and a personality that touched all who knew her.

Second grade students used to play school and pretend they were Sister Mary Thomas whom they loved.

Sister Mary Thomas retired in 2006, moved from St. Philip's Convent in Crafton to Caritas Christi, and was always ready to continue the Lord's work as a volunteer. The Sisters of Charity are grateful for her generosity in helping others.

I share with you that Sister wrote to Mother Richard Ann asking to live in a convent close enough to care for her aunt who was ill. She was her Mother's only sister. Sister went as often as her aunt needed her, even to open the door for the doctor, do errands and assist in any way that she could. Sister was grateful to Mother for her kindness and consideration in this matter.

Sister Mary Thomas also cared for a cousin and good friend Maria Del who was like a sister to her.

The Sisters of Charity would like to thank the Sisters, the nursing staff and all employees for their dedicated care for Sister Mary Thomas during her last days at Caritas Christi.

As all can say that we felt peaceful and loved in her presence.

Gentle, kind, and smiling, Sister Mary Thomas's persona reflected Saint Elizabeth Ann Seton's words: "Through piety and gratitude, we come to the deepest recess of peace and true contentment."

We rejoice with you now, Sister Mary Thomas, as your loving God calls you home to the fullness of eternal life with St. Elizabeth Ann Seton, the Company of Charity, and all your loved ones. We rejoice with you. May you rest in Peace. We love you!

*Sister Geri Marr, SC, April 2024*