



## *Sisters of St. Francis of Mary Immaculate*

*"We cannot see the future or what it has in store for us, but we are open to what God has planned for us ... a continuation of the mystery of life. Truly, life is a mystery to be lived!"* Under the banner of these words, our Sister Mary Ann Creely endeavored throughout her life to help the People of God whom she served as a teacher, principal, counselor, pastoral minister, friend and sister, to remain confident in the providence of God and to find meaning in the challenges that life put before them. Though these words from 1997 may not have been intended originally as a parting gift to those she whom she would leave behind as she made her way home to God at the break of dawn on the Feast of St. Patrick in 2010, they take on new meaning in the light of her unexpected death and the legacy of her life.

Born on the northwest side of Chicago on January 6, 1933, the Feast of the Epiphany, Mary Ann Creely was the fifth of eight daughters born to Thomas and Rose (Franc) Creely. Baptized at St. Pascal Church, she attended the parish school where she came under the influence and inspiration of the Sisters of St. Francis of Mary Immaculate. At the age of thirteen, Mary Ann became an aspirant with the Joliet Franciscans and studied at St. Francis Academy. On September 6, 1948, she entered the postulancy and on August 12, 1949, she became a novice, receiving the name Sister Mary Ronald. She made her First Profession on August 12, 1951, and three years later, on August 13, 1954, she made her Perpetual Profession. Cultivating long and lasting friendships among her Joliet Franciscan sisters as well as the Rochester Franciscan sisters and the Franciscan Sisters of Penance and Christian Charity (Stella Niagra) with whom she also lived, Sister Mary Ann invested herself in creating the conditions for living the evangelical life in the context of life-giving communities of faith, hope and love.

Sister Mary Ann began her teaching ministry at Sacred Heart School in the Englewood area of Chicago. She then taught at Sacred Heart School in Winnetka, Illinois. After teaching five years at St. Mary Magdalene School in Columbus, Ohio, she became the first principal of St. Stephen the Martyr School in Columbus. She also served at schools in Colorado and other parts of Illinois. In 1973, she returned to the Columbus Diocese where she was a pastoral minister for various parishes including the Perry County Consortium of Catholic Parishes as well as St. Cecilia, Holy Spirit, St. Anthony, Holy Family and St. Stephen Parishes in the city of Columbus.

# Alleluia!



*Sister Mary Ann Creely, OSF*

Sister Mary Ann had a reputation for exemplifying the qualities and characteristics of a lifelong learner. In addition to receiving a Bachelor of Arts degree from the College of St. Francis (University of St. Francis) and a Master's degree from DePaul University, Chicago, she also attended Ohio State University, Ohio Dominican University, the College of St. Mary of the Springs, Hocking College and the University of Notre Dame. She regularly attended conferences, workshops, and courses that deepened, enriched and expanded her understanding of everything from Scripture to Spanish, from counseling to computers, from Franciscan spirituality to social justice, from friendship to life transitions, from the role of women in Church and Society to sacramental theology, from intercultural communication for ministry to contemporary research and reflection of aging, loss, and death. As an advocate for those who were made poor or vulnerable by injustice, sickness and countless other hardships in life, she generously set her knowledge and experience at the service of others. For Sister Mary Ann, "to be" was to be "in mission" always and everywhere.

In a letter addressed to Mother Immaculate on May 26, 1953, Sr. Mary Ann wrote, "With the help of God's grace, I am striving to step from the road of mediocrity on to the road leading straight to my eternal goal, heaven, where I may be warmed with the fire of His divine love." May all of us who remember Sr. Mary Ann give thanks to God for the gift of her courage as she "stood against the storms of life," along with the gift of her hospitality which made everyone feel welcome and at home. As she rises now through the strength of heaven, may we never forget her words of wisdom that grounded her vision and vocation: "It's not the big things that are going to aid us for heaven, but it's the little things done in a big way." Rest in peace, dear sister, sojourner and disciple. Alleluia! Alleluia!

## *Sister Mary Ann Creely, OSF*

*January 6, 1933 — March 17, 2010*

<i>Born:</i>	January 6, 1933
<i>Parents:</i>	Thomas P. Creely and Rose (Franc) Creely
<i>Postulancy:</i>	September 6, 1948
<i>Novitiate:</i>	August 12, 1949
<i>First Profession:</i>	August 12, 1951
<i>Final Profession:</i>	August 13, 1954
<i>Entered New Life:</i>	March 17, 2010

### **Ministry History**

1951-1957	Teacher: Grades 3, 4, 6; Sacred Heart, Englewood, Chicago, Illinois
1957-1959	Teacher: Grade 6; Sacred Heart, Winnetka, Illinois
1959-1965	Teacher: Grades 6, 7, 8; St. Mary Magdalene, Columbus, Ohio
1965-1966	Principal: St. Stephen, Columbus
1966-1968	Superior / Principal: St. Mary Magdalene; Columbus
1968-1969	Superior / Principal: St. John the Evangelist; Loveland, Colorado
1969-1970	Teacher: Grade 8; St. Procopius; Chicago
1970-1972	Principal: St. Joseph, Elgin, Illinois
1972-1973	Teacher: Grades 5, 7; St. Ludmilla, Chicago
1973-1975	Teacher: Grade 8; St. Cecilia, Columbus
1975-1978	Counselor; Notre Dame High School, Portsmouth, Ohio
1978-1979	Secretary: Holy Spirit Parish; Columbus
1979-1985	Parish Ministry: St. Anthony, Columbus
1985-1987	Pastoral Associate: St. Anthony, Columbus
1987-1988	Pastoral Associate: 5 Parishes in Perry County; New Straitsville, Ohio
1988-1989	Pastoral Associate: St. Mary, Shawnee, Ohio
1989-1992	Pastoral Associate; Perry County, Shawnee
1992-1997	Pastoral Minister: Perry County Consortium of Parishes, New Lexington, Ohio
1997-1998	Vicar of Religious Office: St. Stephen the Martyr Parish, Columbus
1998-2000	Parish Minister: Holy Family Parish, Columbus
2000-2006	Pastoral Minister: St. Stephen the Martyr, Columbus
2006-2010	Volunteer: St. Stephen the Martyr Parish, Columbus

<i>Wake:</i>	Monday, March 22, 2010, 2:00-6:45 p.m., Our Lady of Angels, Joliet
<i>Prayer Service:</i>	Monday, March 22, 2010, 4:45 p.m., Our Lady of Angels, Joliet
<i>Mass of Christian Burial:</i>	Monday, March 22, 2010, 7:00 p.m., Our Lady of Angels, Joliet
<i>Burial:</i>	Tuesday, March 23, 2010, leaving Our Lady of Angels at 9:00 a.m. to Resurrection Cemetery, Romeoville, Illinois
<i>Interment:</i>	Resurrection Cemetery: Section 8, Lot 364, Grave 8
<i>Predeceased by:</i>	Her parents, Thomas P. and Rose Creely; her sisters, Rosemary Ahrens, Anna Lucille Creely, Joan Graham
<i>Survived by:</i>	Her sisters: Loretta Creely, Patricia Varney, Lucille McCann, Margaret Houston

*Rest in Peace, Sister Mary Ann*