

Sr. Stella Enright's Eulogy

The Book of Proverbs ask: "Where can we find a valiant woman?" Proverbs 31

We are assembled here today to celebrate the life of such a woman, Sr. Stella Marie Enright, a Daughter of Mary and Joseph, a woman of strong faith, courage, extraordinary accomplishments and, true to her name, a stellar human being.

Mary (known as Maudie) Enright was born into a farming community in Athea, Co. Limerick, Ireland to Ned and Bridget Enright on September 25, 1933. The second of six siblings, she was a joyous enthusiastic, confident child.

As a teenager she responded to God's call to be a religious. She entered the Daughters of Mary and Joseph where her cousin Sister Johanna Leahy, (aka Mother Mary Bonaventure) preceded her by several years. As a novice she received the name Sister Stella Marie and enthusiastically embarked on a two-year program of spiritual formation in Ireland and in Belgium. She studied the life and writings of our Founder Canon Constant William Van Crombrughe, and the DMJ Constitutions and charism. Our founder's principles of education, including education of the whole person, so influenced her that they became foundational to her future ministry as an educator. This influence was further enhanced by a wonderful professor, Dr. Frank Sullivan of Loyola University, who instilled in her the courage to speak in public and trust her intuitions.

In 1953 Sister Stella made her first profession as DMJ and was missioned to California to serve in the Los Angeles Archdiocese. Stella taught briefly at St. Augustine's School in Culver City and Our Lady of Peace in San Fernando Valley. She was assigned to St. Paul the Apostle School in Westwood. Here career there was long term – 48 years as teacher and principal. The school flourished under her direction. Her love for the children and her creative and innovative educational skills are legendary (as will be shared by the SPA School Community).

Sister Stella's influence was not confined to St. Paul's. She was deeply influential as an educator and innovative leader in the Los Angeles Archdiocesan Educational System. In the 70's she became a leader and teacher of "Instro-Teach" a program designed to enable principals to be effective spiritual leaders in their schools and communities. In this capacity she worked with principals in several California Dioceses and even in Arizona.

Despite her busy life, Stella was always a deeply committed and involved member of our DMJ Community. Joyful by nature and by grace, she truly lived her life in the joy of the Lord.

Her energy and enthusiasm were boundless. Summer or winter, dawn rarely found Stella sleeping. Each day she arose, fully awake, at 3:00 o'clock, had her morning walk, showered, enjoyed her morning coffee, prayed and was ready for Mass at 6.30.

Stella truly was a woman of prayer. Her spirituality is best described as contemplative in action. Fully attuned to the Lord and guided by the Holy Spirit she ministered tirelessly for the glory of God through her service, compassion and love. She knew where her strength came from and faced with challenges she would say, "The Holy Spirit is in charge." Bouyed by this inner assurance she was ready for anything. She was involved in DMJ activities and held various leadership positions in the community. For the past several years she served as a member of our Retreat Center Board of Directors.

Our Founder calls of us to be 'Instruments of Mercy in the hand of God' and to live our charism of compassion, hospitality and joy. This challenge was wholeheartedly exemplified in Stella's life.

Stella retired from active ministry about two years ago and soon found her vocation as a proponent of human trafficking prevention. In schools and in parishes she gave presentations to raise awareness of this modern form of slavery.