

Necrology

Really "Loretta Mary"

Name: Mary Loretta Santen

Born: December 9, 1899

Nationality: American

Parents: Bernard and Emma Mesch Santen

Baptism: December 10, 1899

Confirmation: May 1910

Education:

Entered: June 24, 1924

Received by: Reverend Mother Mary Moran

Clothing: December 22, 1924

Mistress of Novices: Mother Gertrude Bodkin

First Vows: December 22, 1926

Superior: Reverend Mother Mary Moran

Profession: July 30, 1933

Mistress of Probation: Reverend Mother Jeanne de Traverse, Villa Lante

Change of Residence and Employments:

| <u>House</u> | <u>Superior</u> | <u>Employment</u> |
|------------------------|--|---|
| Rochester 1926-1928 | Reverend Mother Coman | Academic Classes, M. of Studies |
| Maplehurst 1928 | Rev. Mother T. Hill | " " " " |
| " 1933-34 | Rev. Mother Damman | " " " Organist |
| | | " " " Librarian |
| Eden Hall 1934-35 | | Same |
| Kenwood 1935-37 | Rev. Mother Bodkin | Same |
| Overbrook 1937-52 | Rev. Mers. Levis & Fitzgerald | Same |
| Newton College 1952-74 | Rev. Mers. Kenny, Barry S.V. McNally, Heuisler, Quinlan Hasslacher | Faculty of Theology Director of Admissions, Registr. Warden, Archivist (Library) Moderator Interracial Club. |
| Kenwood 1974 | | |

When Newton College's new Chaplain offered Mass for Sister Loretta Mary Santen on the day of her death, he remarked that, although he himself had not met Sister Santen, so many people had asked him to pray for her that he wished he knew more about her. Certainly only the newest of new comers to the college would find her name unfamiliar. From her arrival as Registrar and Director of Admissions in 1952 until just before she went to Kenwood in the spring of this year, she knew and was known by almost everyone connected with the college.

She had exercised her longest pre-Newton apostolate during sixteen years as Mistress of Studies at Overbrook where her strong personality, her meticulous care for detail, and her exceptional grasp of the Society's Plan of Studies gave her powerful and lasting influence for good.

During her last Overbrook years she earned her Master's degree in Religious Education at Providence College. The Dominican theological tradition exactly suited her orderly, hierarchical mind, and this tradition dominated her teaching of theology. "She taught me all I ever knew about theology," one highly intelligent Newton Alumna commented; and it was precisely with those who had to begin at the beginning that Sister Santen did her best work, although she also did marvels with the more advanced and had always read the latest issue of the best theological journals and kept abreast of the latest theological developments.

The Admissions Office was probably the center of her Newton apostolate. Her work as Director was carried out with unparalleled care and insight. It was widely known that her letters of rejection to unaccepted student candidates gave almost more consolation than her letters of acceptance. She spent hours suggesting alternate college choices to disappointed parents. At all times her unerring memory for faces surprised and delighted students and alumnae who had perhaps had little direct association with her after those nervous early interviews.

In 1970 her half-year tour of the West and Canada was a feast to her love of beauty, of the Society, and of her many friends, giving her leisurely opportunity to visit new Sacred Heart houses, to revel in lofty scenery, and to stay with dear relatives.

Although she had for years struggled against ill health, her last months at Newton and Kenwood were a time of more than physical pain. She was strong willed and possessive and active, and so she found it far from easy to give up her work. Even in her last days at Newton she continued to perfect the college and Society archives she had collected and arranged in the library, and months later she kept hoping to return to add finishing touches. Acceptance when it finally came was late and heroic. Most appropriately, she died shortly after Mother Duchesne's feast and just before the Society's birthday on November 21, leaving behind a monument in her precious archives but an even more lasting monument in the minds of those she taught and with whom she lived.