



**“Were not our hearts burning within us  
while he spoke to us on the way?”**

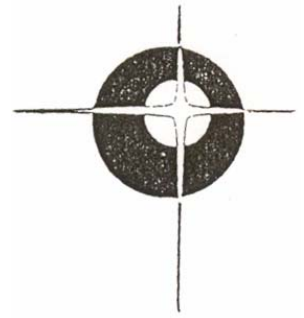
**--Luke 24:32**

**SISTER INEZ HOEY, SSND**

March 11, 1919

July 22, 1939

May 6, 2008



Our beloved Sister Inez Hoey, 89, died at Good Counsel Provincial House, Mankato, Minnesota, Tuesday, May 6, 2008, of renal failure. In June 2007, after the diagnosis, she asked our prayers “as I complete my journey on this wonderfully fragile earth and one day encounter the Divine Presence face-to-face.” Her journey is now complete.

The funeral Mass for Sister Inez, with her Loyola student Father Ted Hottinger, SJ, as presider, will be on May 12 at 6:30 p.m.; visitation is from 3:00-6:15 that same day. Following cremation, burial will take place in our cemetery at a later date. Loving sympathy to her sister, Elizabeth Mekkelsen, cousins, nieces and nephews, and her sisters in community, the School Sisters of Notre Dame, as well as friends, colleagues and former students. She was preceded in death by her parents Bernard and Agnes (Fitzpatrick) Hoey, her brother Francis and sisters Magdalen Vail, Margaret Hoey and Leone Paul.

Sister Inez, the fifth of six children, was born March 11, 1919, on a Le Sueur County farm, and baptized Evelyn Cecilia on March 31 in the rural parish of St. Henry. Intensely proud of her Irish ancestry (100% on both sides), she was raised in a family that exhibited the “treasured Gaelic values of love of family and church, industrious work habits, love of song, dance and card games, and a sense of humor.” Her father farmed and her mother had taught school before their marriage.

For her first eight grades, Evelyn attended the district one-room school across from St. Henry Church, about a mile and one-half from her home. Her pastor provided the parish’s religious instruction and instilled a love of the Eucharist in Evelyn at a young age. In 8<sup>th</sup> grade, she was confirmed by Archbishop John Gregory Murray.

Evelyn’s pastor introduced the family to Good Counsel Academy, and through much family sacrifice in those Depression years, she was able to attend the school as a boarder for four years. She loved her years at Good Counsel and was active in many extra-curricular activities. She came to love her teachers who were School Sisters of Notre Dame, and thought about becoming a sister. A short conversation with Sister Catherine Dennig, the principal, helped Evelyn make up her mind. Sister Catherine asked her, “Evelyn, did you ever think of religious life?” Her answer, “No, cuz I love kids too much.” Sister Catherine’s response was prophetic, “As a teacher-nun you can have lots of kids.”

In July 1936, following graduation, Evelyn spoke to her parents about her decision. They were reluctant at first to give their approval, especially her father. Only after a visit with the father of her good friend Madeline Brennan (Sister M. Carleen) did he begin to think more positively about his daughter being a sister. About the early months in the candidature, Sister Inez wrote, “Each time my family came for a visit, my dad saw happy faces, and from then on he felt that I was in a good place.”

Evelyn became a novice in 1938, and received the name Mary Inez, a form of her mother's name, Agnes. Following Profession Sister Inez began her teaching ministry at Sacred Heart in St. Paul. She wrote that during those years, she returned to her beloved Good Counsel only to renew and take Final Vows.

Most of her years as a teacher and administrator were in secondary schools: Mankato Loyola twice; St. Michael; St. Anne, Wabasso; Good Counsel Academy and Emmons Central, Strasburg, ND. She taught a variety of subjects including English, speech, social problems, world history and algebra, and was principal at Loyola and St. Anne. She earned a bachelor's degree in Education from Mount Mary College and a master's degree in English from Notre Dame University. Her strong commitment to her students is evidenced by their loyalty to her, many years after they left her classroom. She wrote about her teaching years, "My students were special people to me, and it is most warming to have the student-teacher relationship change to friend-friend in years long after the end of classroom days." In recognition of her work at Loyola High School, she was named to the Loyola Hall of Fame in 2001, and two scholarships have been established in her name.

In 1965 Sister Inez began several years in initial formation work, serving first as directress of young sisters and then as postulants' directress. She found the postulants and young sisters delightful to work with, and formed lasting relationships with many of them.

Sister Inez returned to teaching after her formation work, but after eight years (her 40<sup>th</sup> year of teaching), she felt it was time for a change, knowing that her energies were waning. She asked for a non-teaching assignment if possible, and mentioned that she would be interested in secretarial work. She had looked into two positions when the newly elected Provincial Leader, Sister Maureen Murray, asked Sister Inez to consider being her personal secretary. In this way she began her secretarial ministry, working next with Sister Katherine DuVal at Holy Angels in Richfield, and at Good Counsel when Sister Katherine became Provincial Leader in 1995.

In 2003, Sister Inez retired from active ministry. Reflecting on her retirement, she wrote, "Something I really cherish is my unscheduled time. Rising is not early. Prayer is at a convenient time and place, at times in the great outdoors of God's gift of nature. This daily extra time for quiet prayer and reflection is precious....I treasure retirement as I now experience it: a time to reflect gratefully on my gift of vowed life, and all this lived in a caring community." When she was able, she offered her services as a volunteer in the Mankato Catholic Schools in whatever capacity she could be helpful. She also had a special place in her heart for Kitsy the cat.

Ever grateful for the presence and assistance of others, she frequently wrote notes of appreciation. She assisted others as she accepted the gradual diminishment brought on by her illness. In this final journey, she stayed as active as possible, rallied several times from complications, and far out-lived the original prognosis of two-three months.

Like the disciples on the way to Emmaus, she treasured the presence of Jesus in her life. May she now be fully enjoying the treasure of eternal life – and the fullness of the Irish Blessing – being held in the palm of God's hand.

Sister Mary Kay Ash