



### **Sergeant Mary Anderson**

“My favorite quotation is, “Good, better, best, never let it rest, until the good is better and the better is best,” says our staff member, Sister Mary Anderson. “When I was a young girl growing up in Washington, D.C., I never made the honor roll. My father always encouraged me to do my best, though. He looked only at my conduct and effort and grades and asked if I had done the very best I could. I pray every night for forgiveness for my shortcomings-if I have neglected a child or not been as patient as I should have been-and then I add ‘but I tried my very best’.”

“I had to come to terms with my shortcomings in order to become self confident. For instance, I was a terrible speller and I still am.” That did not stop Sister Mary from earning her Bachelor’s degree from St. Joseph’s University, and her L.P.N. from Presbyterian University of Pennsylvania.

“I always wanted two things: to be a nurse and to work with children. When I was younger, I was the ‘pied piper’ of the neighborhood. I would round up all the younger children, and take them to the playground and play with them till lunchtime. I would bring them all home for lunch, and then after lunch off we would go again. I saw religious life as a way to continue working with children for life. I searched for an order that would offer to train me as a nurse, but in 1949, no order would make that kind of guarantee. I settled on the Sisters of Notre Dame de Namur, the order that had educated me in grammar school and high school.

As a teacher and school nurse Sister Mary’s philosophy of teaching children is to encourage children to aim high and focus on their goals, to have a positive attitude and to believe “I can.” “I suppose I come across as a little ‘tough’ to some. In fact, when I first came to OLV, they called me ‘Sergeant Mary.’ I really didn’t mind though. I just said, ‘I hope I get promoted by June – just don’t demote me’.”

There was no sign of toughness Sister Mary grew up in a neighborhood of mostly boys. As a result she developed a love for all kinds of sports. Who knew that behind the Sergeant's stripes we would find such an enormous heart and a Redskins fan too?!

CONGRATULATIONS, Sister Mary, on 49 years of dedication to religious life, nursing and the education of children. *Article by Audrey Giarrantano*