

**Sister Mary Timothy Adams**  
**November 23, 1914 - April 27, 2011**



Sister Mary Timothy was born in Altoona, Pennsylvania in November of 1915. Her parents, Timothy and Rose, named her Rose Marie. Some time after her birth the family moved to Hollidaysburg, a small town not far from Altoona. Sister Mary Timothy seemed to have a special love for Altoona even in her later years. When asked where she was from she would always respond, "I'm just a mountain girl, born in Altoona, Pennsylvania." Her parents raised twelve children, seven boys and five girls. The two youngest boys were born when Sister Mary Timothy was a novice. Sister had two aunts in our congregation, Sister Maria Bernard and Sister Juliana Trexler.

Sister attended Saint Michael School and she was taught by the school Sisters of Notre Dame. Sister Mary Timothy tells us in her interview with Sister James Marie Malone that while in high school she began thinking she would like to be a Sister. She talked with the sisters who taught her in elementary school. When she told her parents that she had talked to the Sisters of Notre Dame about being a Sister in their community, her Dad said, "Why don't you become a Sister of Charity since you have two aunts there?" We can thank her father for steering her to us. She entered the Sisters of Charity on September 8, 1932.

Sister Mary Timothy's ministry was in the field of education. She truly loved to teach and I always heard she was one of our best junior high teachers. One of her former students from Saint Mary School, Chandler, Arizona, told me that he remembers the twinkle in her eyes and her quick smile. He added "Don't think that we could pull any thing over on her. If we tried, that twinkle and smile quickly changed to a stern frown and her voice, to one of authority, and we knew we were in trouble and headed for after school detention." Then he added, "We loved her and respected her and we liked her classes because she was such a creative teacher. She made our classes very interesting and so much fun that we never minded coming to school. I have never forgotten her."

In an article published in "*Today's Catholic Teacher*" magazine, November 1977, Sister Mary Timothy received an award for a creative book parade project that her eighth grade students organized. "Each student chose a favorite book; made a large cardboard depiction of it; mounted it on a small wagon and paraded around the block in costume, accompanied by other classes and proud parents. A drummer and a flute provided martial music." Incidentally, twelve years later, in 1989, when Sister returned to Saint Mary School in Chandler as the librarian, one of the wagons was resurrected and painted red. Sister could be seen pulling the wagon all over the school, collecting overdue books or delivering books to the classroom libraries, etc. She was also known to have given kindergarten children rides in the red wagon.

When our former, Sister Margaret George Chesleigh was sent to teach third grade, she told principal, Sister Mary Timothy, that she was "scared to death and could not teach." Sister Mary Timothy said, "Yes, you can and I am going to help you." Sister Mary Timothy sat down with her every evening and went over the lessons she had to teach the next day. Eventually, Sister Mary Timothy team taught with Sister Margaret George and with encouragement and excellent modeling, Sister Margaret George became an outstanding teacher. She spent her life teaching in Catholic and public schools while she continued her friendship with Sister Mary Timothy.

Sister Mary Timothy also taught religious education to public school children, in addition to teaching in our schools. In the early days of our ministry in Arizona, the diocese was considered missionary territory. Many of the parishes were supported by the Propagation of the Faith. Catholic schools were scarce, as were sisters. Sisters of Charity, spent at least one and sometimes two months every summer going to the parishes that did not have sisters. It was called vacation school and the parishes were distances away from the major cities. We lived in rectories, people's homes or any other places the parish could provide for us. We usually taught several hours in the morning; then had lunch and returned to teach in the afternoon. The children brought bag lunches. At the end of the month we would have children prepared for First Communion. Yes, in a month's time we prepared children for their first sacraments. The pastors were very much involved in these adventures. And believe me, they were adventures. Sister Mary Timothy was always in the volunteer group who left the convent to teach these children God's message of love. In these vacation schools we taught children of a variety of nationalities, Papago, Apache, Navajo, Yaqui all from Native American tribes, Mexican and Anglos. In Tucson during the school year we taught children from the Deaf and Blind School and children in the Comstock Hospital where they were housed while being treated for tuberculosis. Sister Mary Timothy was always part of those experiences and I think it is safe to say that the Sisters of Charity kept the Catholic Church alive and growing in the central and southern parts of the Tucson diocese.

Sister Mary Timothy was also noted for her kindness and exceptional hospitality. She welcomed anyone and everyone who came to the convent. Nothing was too difficult for her to do to make people feel at home. Sister knew who the poor children were in the school and she took care of them. She called upon groups of parents who were financially secure to help her collect uniforms and other clothing which she kept on hand to give to those who were needy. She was especially attentive to our sisters who lived and worked in Ajo, Arizona. She would often call to see if we were all right or needed anything. On a holiday, she and a carload of sisters would travel the hundred thirty miles from Tucson to Ajo, and bring food and other supplies.

Finally, her sense of humor was a gift that she shared with everyone. She was a great storyteller and fun maker. This made her delightful company. Her prayerfulness and her trust in God's loving care were evidence of her deep love for God. Her easy-going disposition, her sense of humor and respect for every person assured a peaceful, holy, happy home for the sisters who lived with her.

Sister Mary Timothy spent fifty years in elementary schools, thirty-five in Arizona and fifteen in Pennsylvania. She told Sister James Marie in her taped interview, "I was moved back and forth between these two states so often, that my life reminded me of the old adage, a rolling stone gathers no moss." No wonder she felt like a rolling stone. Well, Sister Mary Timothy, your rolling days are over. You have rolled into heaven where God was waiting for you. You can now join your Mother Mary and the Angels in adoration of your God forever and ever. May you rest in peace.

*Funeral Liturgy Reflection*  
*~Sister Harold Ann Jones*  
*April 30, 2011*