

# *Sister Mary Maritia Smith, SSND – 70 Year Jubilee!*



*"My life today  
is one of gratitude"*

I grew up on a Maryland dairy farm and one of nine children. I have loved being in the country all my life.

In grade school, I had trouble reading. My teacher sent a note home saying I was uncooperative... my mother knew better. She worked with me until I could read. Her patience was remarkable.

I began to want to help children who didn't have anyone to help them as my mother helped me. I believe I got my vocation from her.

I continued school at IND. During my junior year, a teacher asked me if I had ever thought of becoming a Sister. I realized I could help children that way. So, in 1952, in my senior year, I submitted my letter requesting entry.

I had the support of my entire family.

After teaching elementary school in Maryland, New Jersey, Georgia and Kentucky, I joined Sister Sally Neale to open a women's resource center in the hollers of Kentucky. She was a nurse practitioner as well as an innovator.



We created Sarah's Place to empower women to build skills in a profession where they could provide for themselves now and into the future. In our Child Development Center, we cared for their children ages 6 weeks to school age.

*Pictured left are Sisters Maritia and Sally Neale with the children of Sarah's Place.*



**The Jesuit Seminary/Woodstock, MD  
"First Mass Day" Sr. Maritia with her  
father, brothers and sisters, along w/  
Fathers Eddie Allen & Matt Fullum**

## *Sister Mary Maritia Smith, SSND – Cont'd*

Through collaboration with various persons and agencies we were able to extend our services to the neediest families.

Two of my favorite stories happened there. One was when I met the school bus that dropped off the children in the afternoon. A little girl jumped off and announced, "I'm home!" It made me so happy to have given her that gift of belonging. That little girl has three children of her own today!



**Sr. Maritia (on R) with her sisters  
Regina & Dorothy**

The other story was when we were first looking for a place to house Sarah's Place. We found an old funeral home that would be just right and went to the bank for a loan. The loan officer drew up the papers and then said, "Remember, Sisters, you can't do it on faith alone."

We walked out the door and just howled with laughter. We couldn't have done it on anything else!

I retired back to Maryland after 21 years in Kentucky.

My life today is one of gratitude. Each day I try to share love with everyone I meet, whether with a smile or in words.

I'm so grateful for the wisdom and love and support I've received from my Sisters, my family, and my community over the years.



**"Bowling Nights at Villa Assumpta"**

**L-R: Sisters Marie Mack, Barbara Slaney, Theresa M. Linz, Natividad Aponte, Maritia,  
Judith Ring and Sally Neale**