

**Distinguished and legendary co-founder of St. Michael's Choir School, and respected teacher of Michael Burgess, Matt Dusk, Kevin Hearn, Michael Schade and countless others, passes away at age 88.**

**For immediate release**

Monday December 10, 2007 (Toronto) - Kathleen Mary Mann, died peacefully in the early morning of December 8, 2007, the Solemnity of the Immaculate Conception of Mary, in the presence of her family.

Kathleen Mann began her adult life as a nineteen year-old teacher at the Cathedral Schola Cantorum first in 1937 as an assistant to Monsignor John Edward Ronan before she obtained her Teacher training and Certification at the Toronto Normal School. For 60 years, from 1939 onwards she taught every choirboy who entered the school including the Four Lads, the Crewcuts, Michael Burgess, Matt Dusk, Stewart Goodyear, Kevin Hearn, Claude Morrison, Robert Pomakov, Michael Schade, and countless others. It would take several pages to list them all. Kathleen Mann missed not a single day of work in over 60 years at what is now better known as St. Michael's Choir School.

Kathleen's influence on the life and growth of the school is so profound that she became known as a co-founder along with Monsignor Ronan and Harold Armstrong, long-time organist of St. Michael's Cathedral.

From 1967 until her first retirement in 1984, Kathleen was the school's vice-principal. In 1984 the school's Director persuaded the Archdiocese of Toronto to retain her as an 'advisor in sacred music', a position she held for almost 15 years.

Throughout her tenure Kathleen Mann had taught *all* the Choir School's administrative directors and its choir directors including, Msgr. Peter Somerville, Msgr. Barrett Armstrong, Harry Hodson, Brian Rae, Fr. Stephen Somerville, Edward McCall, Jerzy Cichocki, as well as the many other alumni who returned as teachers.

In spite of her unparalleled contribution, Kathleen never sought the spotlight. She preferred in fact to let her boys shine! As a matter of fact, although Kathleen was the principal trainer of the Elementary and Junior Choirs, she refused to appear as a conductor in public until Msgr. Armstrong persuaded her to do so when he took a year's leave of absence which was late in her career as a conductor. However, she remained on the 'podium' upon his return and held her position with esteem.

One cannot write or speak about Kathleen Mann without mentioning her legendary prowess as a pitcher and batter in the ladies' baseball leagues of the 1930's and 1940's with which she played. She was well remembered by many of the women who went on to be part of 'a league of their own'.

Above all, her service to the school was driven by her devout Catholic faith. Honoured by her community throughout her lifetime, Kathleen was the recipient of the Papal medals *Bene Merenti* and *Pro Ecclesia et Pontifice*. As well she is a member of the Order of Ontario. Her greatest remembrance however, will be in the hearts and minds of her choirboys and their families.

The Mass of Christian Burial for Kathleen Mann will take place in St. Michael's Cathedral on Thursday December 13th, 2007 at 10am. Visitation will take place at Rosar Morrison Funeral Home located at 467 Sherbourne St, Toronto, Ontario on Tuesday December 11th from 7pm to 9pm and on Wednesday December 12th from 2pm to 4pm and 7pm to 9pm. For further information please call 416-924-1408.

If so desired, donations can be made to the Kathleen Mann Memorial Fund of St. Michael's Choir School. To make your donation please call Barb Gris  at 416-397-6367.