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Interview no. 1695

Mary P. Bruce

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THE UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS AT EL PASO INSTITUTE OF ORAL HISTORY

Interviewee:	<u>Mary P. Bruce AKA Dolores P. Bruce</u>
Interviewer:	<u>Eva Antone Ross</u>
Project:	<u>200th Anniversary of the Sisters of Loretto</u>
Location:	<u>El Paso, Texas</u>
Date of Interview:	<u>Sept. 17, 2010</u>
Terms of Use:	<u>Unrestricted</u>
Transcript No.:	<u>1695</u>
Transcriber / Summary:	<u>Jessica Molinar-Muñoz</u>

Mary P. Bruce is her religious name and her legal name is Dolores Patricia Bruce. She was born March 14, 1932. Her father was named James Hynesman Bruce lived in Colorado but went to Mexico City at the age of 19 and stayed for three years and met his future wife. The pair married on Feb. 5, 1931. The two had four children, Mary Peter Bruce was the oldest of the children. During her childhood, she traveled and lived in Mexico, South America, including Costa Rica, and the United States. In 1944 & 1945, her father received letters stated he had to present himself to the government to serve in the war. The family then went to San Antonio to stay with her uncle, Dr. Enrique Novoa. Her father then went to Boston to work for nine months. Her father returned to San Antonio. He then got his CPA because of the G.I. Bill. He worked for Centennial School Supply Company for twenty years. Her family went to Denver, Holy Family Parish because he wanted his children to be taught by the sisters of Loretto. She arrived as a sophomore in Denver. When she was ready to graduate Oct. 1950 she began her journey towards becoming a sister in October of 1950. She attended the Sisters of Loretto in Denver. The program gives you six months to try the lifestyle to see if you would like to continue or leave. After she was committed, she attended a university in Iowa to obtain her bachelors and eventually her Master's degree. Since her childhood was partly in Mexico, South America and the United States, the superiors decided to send her to South America when she completed her Master's degree so she could assist in the starting of a school in La Paz, Peru. She taught first grade for a few years, then taught high school. In 1964 she spend some time in France, the church realized there needed to be a revival and part of that movement was called catechetics. Bruce discusses how she lived in Peru for several years and then moved to Bolivia where she also assisted in teaching. She also helped with a radio program like a *telenovela* to teach the community about faith. She was in Bolivia from 1966-1974. During this period she also discusses when Vatican II was integrated. She discusses the meetings and

trainings they had after the Vatican Council decided to make the reformation of the church. After Vatican II began, she said it was a wonderful time between the Bishop, Priests, Sisters and the Laity. She described this time in the church as a "honeymoon period." During the interview she also discusses her travels to Argentina, Denver, El Paso and China amongst other places. She represented the Sisters of Loretto for the United Nations during 2004 to 2008. The Sisters of Loretto are working on having women in Pakistan become Sisters of Loretto.

Length of interview: 135 minutes

Length of Transcript: 39 pages