My Aunt Mary Ellen was so devoted to and loved her family, Irish roots, and her family in God.

Growing up, I didn’t see my aunt a lot, and when I did, I remember being scared of her in her habit and didn’t understand at all why she was dressed that way. As I got older, I started to understand.

My aunt loved baking, especially her Jordan Marsh blueberry muffins, and trying all kinds of dessert recipes.

She loved sewing, knitting, and making decorations for all holidays. One of my first knitted gifts was an Irish blanket for my wedding, 40 years ago, and a note explaining what each design and stitch meant. She loved making and showing off her Irish Roots. She later made 2 more for both of my daughters because they loved mine so much.

At my wedding, we had an arrangement of flowers for her to wear because she was so special to us. She was so surprised by it. I wore my mother’s wedding dress and I remember Auntie saying that was the first time she saw it. I was honored that I got to wear the dress and for her to be able to see it.

As I had my children, my aunt’s favorite thing to do was to go to JoAnne Fabrics (I don’t think there was one near us that we did not go to). She loved to look for patterns to make whatever anyone needed…be it dresses for my daughters, family PJs, or placemats for every holiday (which I use and think of her all the time). Her talent and skill were amazing. I have kept all the clothes because they were made by her and mean so much to me.

When we went to the Bronx for her Golden Jubilee, I got to meet her second family. Her family in God. It was an honor to stay in the convent in the Bronx and we stayed at the convent when my father was in the hospital, I saw why my aunt had chosen to become a nun. The closeness and kindness everyone showed us was beyond what I could have ever imagined. We were part of their family. I remember all of them with such kindness from the Bronx, St. Raphael’s, and here at the St. Elizabeth Motherhouse.

I will always remember making her a cup of tea with just 2 ice cubes, her love of ice cream, desserts, and our many trips to Joanne Fabrics going through materials and yarn. She always had to find the right color or type of yarn that she was looking for.

As much as my heart hurts from missing her, I know she is happy where she is. Sharing her joy of the Boston Red Sox’s winning ways, her Irish roots, baking, sewing, and knitting with all of her family and friends in heaven. I am sure she is looking down and taking care of all of us here.

Auntie,

May the road rise to me you,

May the wind be always at your back.

May the sun shine warm upon your face,

The rains fall soft upon your fields, and

Until we meet again, may God hold you

In the palm of his hand!

I love and miss you every day, but I know that you are with me always, wherever I go.

Your loving niece,

Joan (Wood)