

## **MARY VISSER, 79, ENGLISH TEACHER**

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Mary F. Visser, a spirited English teacher with a passion for Wordsworth, Hemingway, and the Red Sox, died of Alzheimer's and Parkinson's diseases Friday at Mount St. Vincent Nursing Home in Holyoke. She was 79.

Mrs. Visser taught English to the students of Granby Junior/ Senior High School for more than 30 years. Her love of literature and concern for the future of her students fueled her teaching. "She was very interested in the nurturing and development of good citizens," said her son, Chris.

"She realized that a good education is critical to that development."

An avid traveler even at 70, Mrs. Visser made sure that her strength and assertiveness rubbed off on her children.

"Sometimes you have to cross when it says 'don't walk,'" Lesley Visser recalls her mother saying. It was advice that gave her daughter the courage to become a pioneer in the male-dominated field of sports broadcasting. Lesley Visser, a CBS sports reporter, is the first woman to report from the sidelines during a Super Bowl.

"All that I am or ever hope to be, I owe to my mother," she said, recalling the sentiments of Abraham Lincoln.

Born in Holyoke, Mrs. Visser received a bachelor's degree from Our Lady of the Elms in Chicopee. She taught in Maryland and then Derby Academy in Hingham for several years before joining Granby High School in 1966.

Besides her son, of Phoenix, and daughter, of Boca Raton, Fla., Mrs. Visser leaves a brother, Edward B. Coughlin of Holyoke; and a sister, Ellen Whalen of Norfolk.

A funeral Mass will be said Friday at 10 a.m. in Holy Cross Church in Holyoke. Burial will be in Evergreen Cemetery in South Hadley.