

## Pandemic Influenza Storybook

Hi, my name is Beth Hines. In 1957 I lived in Lincoln, Nebraska. I was 8 years old and I was going to Blessed Sacrament School and at the time I used to walk to school with my best friend who was my next door neighbor, Mary Jo. And one day we walked to school and during the day we were given a letter to take home to our family, our parents. And we didn't know what that letter said until the nun who was teaching my class told us that there was a terrible flu in town and that we needed to take this letter home to our parents and that we were going to be off from school for the next week because too many kids were getting sick and we needed to stay home. So we all cheered and raced home to give my mom this letter and I was very happy because I was practicing for a piano recital and was hoping that the piano recital would also be postponed or hopefully cancelled because I didn't want to have to get up on the stage and do the 'Dance of the Daffodils' before the families and the nuns and everyone else. So, after a couple of days of playing outside and having a good time, none of us in my family had gotten sick yet. There was a knock at my door and I answered the door and one of my favorite people, Dr. Lhara, from next door was standing there. And I loved him, he was one of my favorite people, he was our family doctor and he was Mary Jo's father. Now, Dr. Lhara and I were very good friends because I was the kid in the neighborhood who was always on my bike and always falling down and always hitting the pavement and I got scratched up and I needed stitches or I needed band aids or I needed something. And he always had his kit handy and would patch me up. So I figured something good was coming. And he said that in fact he had some flu vaccine and he wanted to talk to my mom. I got mom. She came down to the door and Dr. Lhara came in and he said, 'Lo and behold his kids,' he had two daughters, Mary Jo and her older sister, 'typically would not let him give them the flu shot and so he wondered if we would like to have the flu vaccination because his kids wouldn't take it.' And of course we thought this

was great. So the four of us lined up and we all got the flu shot. And my mother was very happy because she was, she was quite aware that the vaccine was not available in town and that this was a serious flu and families were very sick, kids were sick. People were very ill and it was the talk of the town that this was very serious. So we all got the flu shot. Unfortunately, the piano recital took place. I had to do the 'Dance of the Daffodils'. And afterwards the families were gathered in the foyer of the school and I remember standing on some stairs, as kids will do, to just sorta listen in on what the families were talking about and I heard the parents and families talking about this dreaded flu. And how many children and, and others had, you know were really very sick. And I had remembered that I couldn't say anything about having had the flu shot because my mother had warned us very sternly that we were probably the only family that had, had made available to us this flu vaccination and that we were not to tell other people that we had gotten the shot. So we were really grateful that, that a Dr. Lhara was our good friend.