

Sister Rita Jean Brock, O.S.F. (Marianne)



Born: November 4, 1926
Parents: John and Ann (Delaney) Brock
Entered from: St. Jude Parish, New Lenox, IL
Postulancy: September 8, 1942
Novitiate: August 12, 1943
Profession: August 12, 1945

Died: Thursday April 2, 1998 at Our Lady of Angels
Our Lady of Angels Retirement Home, Joliet, IL at 6:10 p.m.

Ministry:
1945 - 1946 College of St. Francis, Student
1946 - 1949 Sacred Heart, Hubbard Woods, IL, Grade 4
1949 - 1951 St. Joseph, Freeport, IL, Grades 4, 5, 6
1951 - 1953 St. Mary, Columbus, OH, Grade 6
1953 - 1956 St. Clement, Chicago, IL, Grade 5 and High School Sewing,
Religion, Chemistry, Algebra, Geometry
1956 - 1962 Marybrook Academy, Maumee, OH, Home Economics, Algebra,
Junior Red Cross, Recreation Program
1962 - 1963 St. Peter's High School, Mansfield, OH, Home Economics,
Applied Math
1963 - 1966 Our Lady of Angels Retirement Home, Joliet, IL, Dietician
1966 - 1976 St. Francis de Sales High School, Chicago, IL, Chairman of the Math
Department, Algebra, Geometry
1976 - 1978 SS Peter and Paul, Chicago, IL, Junior High Teacher
1978 - 1990 St. Francis Academy, Joliet, IL, part-time teaching: Math;
Assistant to OLA Local Coordinator for sisters
1990 - 1991 Our Lady of Angels Retirement Home, Director of Environmental
Services
1991 - 1997 Our Lady of Angels Retirement Home, Assistant to OLA Local
Coordinator for sisters; Math Tutor
1997 - 1998 Our Lady of Angels Retirement Home, Volunteer Services

Wake: Our Lady of Angels, Joliet, IL, Sunday, April 5, 1998
2-7 p.m. with prayer service at 4:30 p.m.

Mass of Christian Burial: Our Lady of Angels, Joliet, IL
Sunday, April 5, 1998 at 7:00 p.m.

Burial: Monday, April 6, 1998 leaving Our Lady of Angels at
9:00 a.m. to Resurrection Cemetery, Romeoville, IL, S8-L338-G10

Survived by: her sisters Clare Gast of Manhattan, IL, Betty (Tom) Manning of
Lakeport, CA, Anna Marie Russ of Joliet, IL, Theresa Cuff of San
Francisco, CA, sister-in-law Joan Brock of Orange, TX and many
nieces and nephews

*For those who have been faithful, O Lord,
life is not ended, but merely changed.*

Sister Rita Jean Brock was born in Jefferson, Iowa on November 4, 1926 to John and Ann Delaney Brock. Rita was the second youngest of seven children, Clare, Betty, Anna Marie, Robert, Phillip, herself and Theresa. When Rita was very young her mother died. The family moved from Farlin, Iowa to Manhattan, Illinois and later, to rural Mokena. She graduated from St. Patrick Grammar School in Joliet, and St. Francis Academy.

Rita became a postulant with the Joliet Franciscan Sisters on September 8, 1942. In his letter of recommendation, Rita's pastor at St. Jude's in New Lenox, Father Roman Hasenstab, OFM described her as a "common sense rarin' to go and do American girl" who "consistently and in an unassuming way has given a good example to the young people of the parish." Rita entered the novitiate the following August 12, when she received the name Sister Marianne. She later returned to her Baptismal name of Rita Jean.

Following first profession of vows on August 12, 1945, Sister Rita Jean continued her studies at the College of St. Francis before beginning ministry of education which included elementary and secondary education in various schools in Illinois and Ohio, including six years at Marybrook Academy in Maumee, Ohio, and 13 years at St. Francis Academy in Joliet. Sister Rita Jean loved her teaching, especially the slow learners and the under privileged. Young people invigorated her and gave her a thirst for life. While teaching at St. Francis De Sales High School on Chicago's east side, she volunteered her services for the children at the South Chicago YMCA, serving as a basketball coach.

Sister Rita Jean was an active member of Network, a lobby group for social justice and was always quick to speak up for the rights of the underserved. When she had spare time, she enjoyed sporting events in which she often took an active part, as well as crocheting, and reading. She delighted in family gatherings at various holiday times. Her love for prayer and reflection led her to the Atlantic Coast at Eastern Point Retreat House to make a thirty day retreat.

From 1963-1966 Sister Rita Jean served as the Dietician at Our Lady of Angels Retirement Home in Joliet. She returned to Our Lady of Angels in 1978 to assist the Local Coordinator of the Sisters. She remained at OLA assisting in various ways to serve the needs of the Sisters even as her rheumatoid arthritis made increasing demands on her body. "From the elderly," she said, "I learn a peace and joy that comes from being faithful to the Lord."

During the latter part of March of 1998, Sister Rita Jean was hospitalized because of difficulty in breathing. Her condition quickly grew weaker. On Thursday, April 2, 1998, after the hospital staff felt they had done all they could, Sister Rita Jean returned to Our Lady of Angels where she had spent so many years in service. Early that evening as the Sisters were finishing their evening meal, Sister Rita Jean left this world to enter into the eternal banquet in heaven.

Sister Rita Jean, we thank you for your words of peace and prophetic justice which burned in your heart. May the love you showed to others shine as a beacon of truth to all. Pray for us, your friends, pupils, family and your Franciscan Sisters that we may lead others to justice and light. Amen. Alleluia.

