



Sisters of St. Francis of Mary Immaculate

“My aim in religious life has never been to acquire a great name for myself as an artist but to be of service to others.” Our Sister Rita Greene wrote those words thirty-four years ago. They are words that marked her entire Franciscan life, a life of service to others.

Sister Rita Greene was the fourth of nine children born to the late Helen (Scheiblich) and Michael Greene on July 6, 1919, in Columbus, Ohio. Her older siblings, now deceased, were Michael, James and Helene and younger siblings, now deceased, were Jerome, Lydia, Luella, and Joseph. Her remaining sister, Patricia Sorenson, still lives in Columbus.

Sister Rita grew up in Holy Rosary Parish and attended St. John the Evangelist grade school. After her first year of high school at Holy Rosary, she came to Joliet, Illinois, and entered St. Francis Preparatory, completing her high school at St. Francis Academy. Her two aunts, now deceased, Sisters Evelyn and Lydia Scheiblich, had joined the Sisters of St. Francis many years before and may have influenced Rita to come to Joliet.

On September 8, 1935, Rita became a postulant with the Sisters of St. Francis of Mary Immaculate. A year later, on August 12, 1936, Rita entered the novitiate receiving the name Sister Mary Alexander. Pronouncing her first vows on August 12, 1938, Sister Alexander then became a full time student at the College of St. Francis in Joliet.

In the fall of 1940 she began her ministry of teaching at St. Bernard grade school in Joliet where she taught kindergarten, first and second grades for four years. Sister Alexander made her final vows on August 12, 1941. In 1944 she moved to Sacred Heart parish in Hubbard Woods, Illinois, where she taught kindergarten, second and fifth grades for the next ten years.

Her summers were filled with weeks at Marybrook Academy in Maumee, Ohio, Guardian Angel Home and CYO at St. Raymond in Joliet. Advanced study began at Siena Heights in Adrian, Michigan. But then, in the summer of 1954, Sister Alexander began her summer studies at Catholic University in Washington, D.C., returning to Joliet in the fall to begin teaching art at the College of St. Francis. She graduated with a Master of Fine Arts in 1958. Further studies during summers took her as close as Marquette University in Milwaukee, Wisconsin, and as far as the University of Florence in Italy, as well as ten weeks of study in Yugoslavia.

Alleluia!



Sister Rita Greene, OSF

After 22 years of teaching at the College of St. Francis, something began to stir within the heart of Sister Rita. The stirring grew when she read an ad in the *National Catholic Reporter*: “The Diocese in Agana, Guam, needs teachers.” Sister Rita writes: “At that time, I wanted a change, and the thought of a little adventure fascinated me. . . .God’s world is filled with wonders, and I wanted to continue to be aware of them, especially as an artist.” Sister Rita spent three years in Guam and then felt the need to return to Joliet and her Sisters. Teaching seminarians at St. Charles Borromeo Seminary in Romeoville, Illinois, followed by a year coordinating the art program at the Franciscan Learning Center in Joliet filled the next two years.

Once again, the stirring returned and Sister Rita began discerning the movement of the Spirit within her. She wrote: “How does one try to convince others that she feels a calling deep within her to do a certain thing?” At first she thought maybe being with our sisters in Brazil was the answer, but that was not to be. Then the call of Guam returned. Sister Rita wrote: “I have tried to put Guam in the past by throwing myself wholeheartedly into my present work. At times I thought I had succeeded but now I realize a force stronger than myself is calling me to return.” She goes on to speak of the inner anguish she is experiencing in her desire to return to Guam.

Sister Rita’s return to Guam was in fulfillment her aim: “My aim in religious life has never been to acquire a great name for myself as an artist but to be of service to others.” Sister Rita, you gave your all in service to others. When you returned to us in 2002 you brought with you a legacy of living our Franciscan presence wherever we may be. Our prayers are with you. Please pray for us.

Alleluia. Alleluia.

Sister Rita Greene, OSF
July 6, 1919 — December 8, 2013

<i>Born:</i>	July 6, 1919
<i>Parents:</i>	Michael A. Greene and Helen (Scheiblich) Greene
<i>Postulancy:</i>	September 8, 1935
<i>Novitiate:</i>	August 12, 1936
<i>First Profession:</i>	August 12, 1938
<i>Final Profession:</i>	August 12, 1941
<i>Entered New Life:</i>	December 8, 2013

Ministry History

1938-1940	Student: College of St. Francis, Joliet, Illinois
1940-1944	Teacher: Grades Kindergarten, 1 and 2, St. Bernard, Joliet
1944-1954	Teacher: Kindergarten, Grades 2 and 5, Sacred Heart, Hubbard Woods, Illinois
1954-1976	Teacher: Art, College of St. Francis, Joliet
1976-1977	Teacher: Art, Bishop Baumgartner School, Sinajana, Guam
1977-1978	Teacher: Junior High, Notre Dame, Tolofofo, Guam Teacher: Freshmen, Duenas High School, Tai, Guam
1978-1979	Teacher: Duenas High School, Agana, Guam
1979-1980	Teacher: Art, St. Charles Borromeo Sem., Romeoville, Illinois
1980-1981	Coordinator of Art Program, Franciscan Learning Center, Joliet
1981-1985	Teacher: Duenas High School, Agana, Guam
1985-1988	Secretary/Clerk: Duenas High School: Agana Guam
1988-1989	Teacher: Mt. Carmel High School, Saipan
1989-2002	Director of Media Center/Librarian: Fr. Duenas Memorial School, Agana, Guam
2002-2013	Community Service, Our Lady of Angels, Joliet

<i>Wake:</i>	Friday, December 13, 2013, 2:00-6:45 p.m., Our Lady of Angels, Joliet
<i>Prayer Service:</i>	Friday, December 13, 2013, 4:45 p.m., Our Lady of Angels, Joliet
<i>Mass of Christian Burial:</i>	Tuesday, December 13, 2013, 7:00 p.m., Our Lady of Angels, Joliet
<i>Burial:</i>	Friday, December 14, 2013, leaving Our Lady of Angels at 9:00 a.m. to Resurrection Cemetery, Romeoville, Illinois
<i>Interment:</i>	Section 8, Lot 361, Grave 11, Resurrection Cemetery
<i>Predeceased by:</i>	Her parents, Michael A. Greene and Helen (Scheiblich) Greene; her brothers, Michael, James, Jerome and Joseph; her sisters, Helen Terrill, Lydia Greene and Luella Trumball; and her two aunts who were also members of the Sisters of St. Francis of Mary Immaculate, Sisters Evelyn and Lydia Scheiblich.
<i>Survived by:</i>	Her sister, Patricia (William) Sorenson of Columbus, Ohio.

Rest in Peace, Sister Rita