

Alleluia!

Sister Mary Rita McCabe, OSF



Sister Mary Rita McCabe was born in Chicago, Illinois, on February 18, 1917, to Irene (Dwyer) and John Joseph McCabe. She was baptized at Our Lady of Sorrows Church in Chicago and attended grade school in this parish school. Mary Rita was one of four children. Her brother James and her sisters Margaret and Irene preceded her in death.

From an early age, Mary Rita felt very close to God and thought about becoming a religious sister. In our community writing, *A Patchwork Quilt*, Mary Rita shared the story of her admiration for the Little Flower, how she took the name of Theresa as her confirmation name and how she wanted to join the convent at an early age. And she did. When she was only 15 and a sophomore at our Prep, she requested to see Reverend Mother and asked permission to become a postulant. To her surprise and delight, she was granted her desire and entered the convent just three weeks later at the age of 16. In fact, when she entered the community she wrote her name as Mary Theresa. Sister Mary Rita has told this story many times and smiled each time she told it. On February 2, 1933, Mary Rita became a postulant. In August of that same year, she became a novice and received the name Sister Anselm Marie. Her temporary vows were professed in 1935 and her final vows in 1938.

Sister Anselm Marie taught for many years in the states of Illinois, Ohio and Alabama. She was also a principal for some of these years. Sister Anselm Marie was very happy being with the children and working with the parents. She kept in contact with many of her students throughout the years. We all know of her devotion to Francis Cardinal George, one of her first grade students at St. Pascal's in Chicago. One of the great highlights in her life was that she could be present in Rome when he became a Cardinal. She walked with him and prayed for him on many occasions.

Sister Mary Rita continued to teach in a regular classroom until her health prevented it. When the blow came one morning realizing that she had lost the majority of her hearing overnight, she was devastated and wondered how she could continue to teach, the ministry that she so loved. Shortly after receiving a certificate from Northwestern University to teach hearing-impaired children, she took a job working for Catholic Charities. This ministry enabled her to teach children, to be a "head" teacher enabling her to work with teachers in preparing their lesson plans and pupil objectives and to assist children of families in the area who needed help in this area. She was a real asset to the work of Catholic Charities and remained in this ministry for 11 years.

When it was time to move into something new, Sister Anselm Marie, now Sister Mary Rita, moved into the community of Divine Savior in Norridge, Illinois. Her life blossomed even more during these 22 years. Her main ministry was being a Eucharistic Minister and a visitor to the homebound but she also got very involved in other parish activities. Her acting talents were recognized as she participated in many parish plays and at neighborhood theatres. She performed in "Return of the Mummy," "Arsenic and Old Lace," "Dirty Works at the Crossroads" and "Wild West Review." Not only did she enjoy being in the plays but she brought smiles and happiness to the audience also. Sister Mary Rita loved to talk and visit with people and bring joy to their hearts.

When Sister Mary Rita left Norridge to live at the Felician Motherhouse in Chicago she made many friends and enjoyed her time with the sisters. From there she moved to Our Lady of Angels Retirement Home and once again made herself at home at prayer, in community and in new endeavors. She was one of the first sisters to learn to use the computer, especially e-mail. We all know she often traveled to visit friends in the Chicago area but it was a pattern with her that each time she returned to her home at OLA, one of the first things she did was to check her e-mail and respond to her messages. She loved to be in communication with people.

Sister Mary Rita loved quiet also and took her prayer and spiritual reading time seriously. She was very devoted to readings on the Eucharist, on how God so warmly shared himself with us. It is very fitting that on Sunday, April 30th, right after receiving the Eucharist at Mass, that she was called home to her God whom she loved and served so faithfully for so many years.

Sister Mary Rita, we thank you for all the life and happiness you shared with each of us. We will pray for your classmates Sisters Mary McKeon, Christine Lentsch, Mary Franz, Kathleen Kirk, Luke Livingston and Mariarthur Hamann and all your relatives and friends who mourn you. We pray for all the sisters and family members who are in Heaven greeting you with peace and radiance. May you rest comfortably with your God for all eternity. Amen. Alleluia.

Sister Mary Rita McCabe, OSF

February 18, 1917 — April 30, 2006

Born: February 18, 1917, Chicago, IL
Parents: John McCabe and Irene (Dwyer) McCabe
Postulancy: February 2, 1933
Novitiate: August 12, 1933
First Profession: August 12, 1935
Final Profession: August 12, 1938
Entered New Life: April 30, 2006

Ministry History

1935-1936 Teacher; Grade 1: St. Mary, Columbus, OH
1936-1937 Teacher; Grades 2 and 3: St. Mary, Columbus, OH
Teacher; Grade 1: Immaculate Conception, Toledo, OH
Teacher; Grade 4: St. Pascal, Chicago, IL
1937-1938 Teacher; Grade 1: St. John the Baptist, Joliet, IL
1938-1945 Teacher; Grade 1: St. Pascal, Chicago, IL
1946-1948 Teacher; Grade 1: St. Mary, Fairfield, AL
1948-1956 Teacher; Grade 1: St. Raymond, Joliet, IL
1956-1957 Teacher; Grade 1: St. Pius X, Lombard, IL
1957-1958 Teacher; Grade 1: St. Michael, Worthington, OH
1958-1960 Teacher; Grades 5, 7: St. Mary Magdalene, Columbus, OH
1960-1961 Teacher; Grade 7: Sacred Heart, Hubbard Woods, IL
1961-1964 Teacher, Superintendent, Principal; St. Joseph, Manhattan, IL
1964-1966 Teacher; Grade 8: St. Rita, Aurora, IL
1966-1967 Teacher; Grade 7: St. Bernard, Joliet, IL
1967-1968 Teacher; Grade 6: St. Pascal, Chicago, IL
1968-1969 Catholic Charities: Assumption, Chicago, IL
1969-1970 Catholic Charities: Holy Redeemer, Chicago, IL
1970-1973 Teaching the Hearing Handicapped: Holy Redeemer Convent,
Evergreen Park, IL
1973-1975 Teaching the Deaf : Our Lady of Loretto, Hometown, IL
1975-1976 Supervisor of Teachers for Hearing Impaired: Most Holy Redeemer,
Evergreen Park, IL
1976-1977 Supervisor / Principal: Catholic Charities, Chicago, IL
1977-1992 Parish Ministry: Divine Savior, Norridge, IL
1992-1998 Pastoral Ministry: Divine Savior, Norridge, IL
1998-2006 Retired / Special Ministry

Wake: Thursday, May 4, 2006, 2:00-6:45 p.m., Our Lady of Angels, Joliet
Wake Service: Thursday, May 4, 2006, 4:45 p.m., Our Lady of Angels, Joliet
Mass of Christian Burial
Burial Thursday, May 4, 2006, 7:00 p.m., Our Lady of Angels, Joliet
Friday, May 5, 2006, leaving Our Lady of Angels at 9:00 a.m. to
Resurrection Cemetery, Romeoville, IL
Interment: S8-L5-G12 Resurrection Cemetery
Predeceased by: Her parents John J. McCabe and Irene V. (Dwyer) McCabe; her brother,
James J. McCabe, and her sisters, Margaret L. Bohle and Irene Helen
(Keith) Cantine
Survived by: Nieces and nephews

Rest in Peace, Sister Mary Rita