

Sister Rose Rita Orf, C.PP.S.

Born: May 5, 1920

Professed: August 10, 1947

Entered into Life: December 3, 2021

Verse on her memorial card:

“This is what the Lord asks: To act justly, to love tenderly, and walk humbly with your God.” (Micah 6:8)



December 6, 2021

Dear Sisters,

At approximately 4:15 p.m. on Friday, December 3, 2021, our Sister Rose Rita Orf's long season of Advent waiting ended. Sisters had been keeping vigil with her for more than a week, and three sisters were praying with her Friday afternoon as Jesus called her to meet him in all His Majesty.

Sr. Rose Rita was born in Flint Hill, MO on May 5, 1920, and baptized the next day as Catherine Elizabeth Orf. She was the third of seven children of Leo and Margaret (Menten) Orf. She entered our novitiate in 1945 and professed first vows on August 10, 1947. Sr. Rose Rita received a Bachelor of Arts from Notre Dame College, St. Louis.

Sister Rose Rita dedicated 47 years to teaching in elementary schools. Though tiny, her presence in the classroom was far from diminutive. She expected the best of her students, and they gave their best in response. In Missouri, she taught at St. Monica, St. Louis; St. Peter, Fulton; St. Joseph, Rhineland; St. John the Baptist, Gildehaus; St. Theodore, Flint Hill; Sacred Heart, Ozora; St. Patrick, Wentzville; St. Agnes, Bloomsdale; and Most Sacred Heart, Florissant. She also taught at St. Rose in Quincy, IL and St. Pius X in Pueblo, CO.

Sister Rose Rita was the last of our sisters to teach at Most Sacred Heart in Florissant. Her retirement concluded our community's 117 years of presence in the parish. In a school newsletter the principal wrote, "She personifies what the Precious Blood Sisters have meant to Sacred Heart and its people. She has touched the lives of literally thousands of children and adults. . . She truly lives her faith each day. Words cannot express our gratitude to her."

Sister Rose Rita was a deeply prayerful person, always quick to express gratitude. In a 1989 letter she wrote, “God is so good to me, and I thank Him every day for His love for this small creature so prone to question the ‘why’s.’” Even in her last days of life when she was responding minimally, she whispered the words, “Thank you for coming.”

Her trust in God was her bedrock. I will always treasure her response to my request for prayers when I was facing a very challenging situation in my former ministry. She replied, “Of course I will pray. But, you know, whatever happens, it will be okay.” These words offered amid her own intense physical pain continue to inspire me – whatever happens, it will be okay.

Sister Rose Rita was nurtured by a loving, close-knit family, and she was inspired by her parents’ deep faith and selfless giving. She loved all her siblings, and she felt particularly blessed by her bond with Sister Emily and Monsignor Ray. Throughout her 101 years, she treasured time with her family. She recalled resisting her vocation because she was having “so much fun” with her family and her friends, both boys and girls.

What a wonderful family reunion must be taking place! Sister Rose Rita now is reunited with her parents and all her siblings, Vincent, Anthony, Marion, Msgr. Ray, Martin, and with her sister and ours, Sister Emily. She is survived by her sisters-in-law Janet and Ursula Orf, nieces, nephews, cousins, and many friends. Please keep them in prayer.

There will be a wake at Baue Funeral Home in O’Fallon from 4-7 p.m. on Wednesday, December 8, 2021. We will welcome Sister’s body to St. Joseph Chapel* at 9 a.m. on Thursday, December 9. Her Funeral Mass will be celebrated at 11 a.m. on Thursday followed by burial in our convent cemetery. Never wanting to call attention to herself, Sister Rose Rita requested that there be no public sharing of memories nor display of photos.

Sister Rose Rita chose Micah 6:8 as the verse for her memorial card, “This is what the Lord asks: to act justly, to love tenderly, and to walk humbly with your God.” I can think of no better words to describe how she lived. May she now be enjoying a pain-free new life in the presence of the One whom she loved so deeply.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Sr. Janice Bader". The ink is dark and the handwriting is fluid and personal.

Sr. Janice Bader