



Sister Rita Rutzke

While attending public high school, Sister Rita Rutzke said she felt called by God to a life of contemplation and prayer in a Carmelite Community. "Keeping this lofty desire in my heart, I led an ordinary teenager's life," said Sister Rita.

An opportunity for an after-school job at St. Joseph's Hospital, in Elmira, NY presented itself. There she met the Sisters of Saint Joseph. "Their joy and peace were contagious, and I found myself, thinking about joining their Congregation," said Sister.

For over 60 years, Sister Rita had a myriad of assignments in the Diocese of Rochester that included St. Stanislaus School, Nazareth Hall Cadet School, and Our Lady of Good Counsel in Rochester; St. Patrick's, Seneca Falls; St. Mary Our Mother, Horseheads; SS Peter and Paul and St. Mary's, Elmira; and Immaculate Conception, Ithaca.

Sister's teaching career culminated in three Special Education assignments: BOCES #1 Fairport, BOCES in Elmira, and teaching five-year-olds at United Cerebral Palsy. "I also enjoyed travelling to Day Care centers, Public Schools and homes," she said.

In her retirement, Sister Rita worked in the Sisters' Infirmary as well as in the Sisters Care ministry, helping those confined to their homes.

In 2014 during her 60th Jubilee celebration, Sister Rita said, "To God, I say: Thank you for my religious vocation. Serving God's people has brought me so much joy!"