

IN MEMORIAM



Sr. Rita Herman

(Sister Mary Ralph)

BORN: March 1933

ENTERED CONGREGATION: August 30, 1950

DIED: January 7, 2014

On the occasion of her 60th Jubilee as a Sister of the Precious Blood, Sister Rita Herman wrote, "I have found over the years that my life has been a 'Cup of Life Poured Out in Love' for the Lord and my Precious Blood Community." This talented but unassuming woman gave her best to her Lord, her Sisters, her family and those to whom she ministered so generously.

Rita Pauline Herman arrived to the delight of her parents, Edwin and Theresa (Ruen) Herman in March 1933 in Lima, Ohio. She was the first child and also the first grandchild. Over the next 12 years she was blessed with seven siblings — two sisters and five brothers. "Being the oldest of eight children," she repeated through the years, "I took care of my brothers and sisters and I continue to care for others in my life." How true this was; even on the Emma Hall Floor of the nursing home she continued to care in little ways for others.

Her family belonged to the Immaculate Conception Parish in Ottoville, Ohio and Rita attended the Ottoville Local Grade School. When she was seven years old she contracted polio and had complete paralysis. The doctor told her parents, "If she lives, she'll never walk." When her mother asked, "What about her arms?" the doctor replied, "nobody knows." Many prayers were offered, especially by the Sisters of the Precious Blood who lived with her Aunt, Precious Blood Sister Salome Ruen at Rome City, Indiana. Many of these prayers were to Mother Brunner, foundress of the Community, requesting a cure through her intercession. No dramatic cure occurred, but gradually after several months the paralysis left and Rita slowly regained the use of her limbs. This experience, Rita felt, brought her to become a daughter of Mother Brunner and carry on her work among those in need. Rita attended high school at

the motherhouse of the Precious Blood Sisters.

On August 30, 1950 Rita, at the age of 17, formally entered the Congregation of the Sisters of the Precious Blood. She received the name in religion of Sister Mary Ralph. A number of years later she, like so many other Sisters, returned to using her baptismal name.

In 1953 she began a wonderful ministry of teaching which continued through 56 years. She taught mainly math to junior high students in the next 17 years. Sister Rita excelled at and enjoyed teaching students in Sedalia, Mo; Fort Wayne, Ind; and in Celina, North College Hill, Cleveland and Dayton, Ohio.

After spending many summers as a college student, Sister Rita earned a Bachelor of Science Degree in Education and later on she earned a Master of Arts in Teaching Math.

As an educator at the elementary level, her living of basic Christian principles and availability to others were evident to students and fellow staff members. Sister went the extra mile and met the needs of students of various levels of competence, bringing the best out of them. She raised her students' computation skills, understanding of concepts and their self-confidence. She assisted many students in advanced math studies. Sister created a very comfortable atmosphere in which the students could interact and problem solve. She made a difference in their lives.

In 1971 Sister Rita was ready for a diversion from total classroom instruction. She began ministering as Math Specialist, Librarian and Teacher in the Genesee Catholic School System in Flint, Michigan. She served there ably for 28 years. She became a part-time school librarian and office helper when needed. Tutoring individual Junior High students who asked for assistance in mathematics was one of the

highlights of her later years in teaching. She hosted two large book fairs each year, assisted with band, spaghetti dinners, ice cream socials and assisted the principal in preparing for school accreditation. In addition she had the opportunity to teach adult basic education two nights per week in the Flint Adult High School. "I found it very rewarding," she said. "I have been blessed ... how better to spread the kingdom of God than having the opportunity of working with many students and their families and also many, many other people" over the years.

In 2000-2009 she was a member of St. John Vianney Parish where she cherished the privilege of being a Eucharistic minister. At that time no other Sisters lived with her, giving her many occasions for solitude with the Lord. Spiritual reading and many other articles of interest occupied hours of her leisure time.

Each year the Herman family reunion proved to be a memorable experience. She cherished her family and the time spent with them.

In 2009 Sister Rita retired and moved to the Salem Heights motherhouse to be with other Sisters of the Precious Blood. Her retirement included solving all kinds of puzzles and playing Solitaire. Although 3D puzzles took time and persistence she did enjoy the satisfaction of putting them together. Unfortunately Sister was afflicted with dementia and later resided with her Sisters on the Emma Hall floor in the Maria Joseph Center nursing home. A little less than a year later Our Lord called her home.

We rejoice with her on entering her new life. We shall miss you, dear Rita, and ask you to remember to intercede for the needs of your family members and for us in our ministries. Now be with God!

— Sister Nancy Kinross