

Milestones

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lege while she was teaching.

In 1970, she joined the staff of St. Theodore's School as the learning center director, then the religious education coordinator. Six years later, she went to work at St. Ann's Home as the chief switchboard operator. She also served as receptionist at the motherhouse.

Sister Joseph Catherine spent eight years in auxiliary service at the motherhouse before retiring last year.

Sister Petrina Trybalski, SSJ, cherishes one particular memory from early in her career.



During her summer ministry in 1942 at St. Joseph's Hospital, Elmira, Sister Petrina became acquainted with a young female patient. Eventually, the woman expressed a desire to become a sister.

The patient converted to the Catholic faith, but her health did not allow her to take the vows of a sister. So she became a member of the Third Order of Francis.

The woman now resides in a proprietary home in Pennsylvania. And the two still correspond.

"It was a rewarding experience for me at the age of 25," Sister Petrina said. "And I am still inspired by her spiritual insights."

Another experience that expanded her knowledge of new cultures was the opportunity to be a chaperon for a student tour one summer.

Born in Rochester, Sister Petrina graduated from Benjamin Franklin High School. She entered the Sisters of St. Joseph in 1935, and three years later she began teaching elementary school students. She taught at St. Theodore, St. Patrick, St. Casimir, St. Stanislaus, Immaculate Conception, Corpus Christi, St. Joseph's, Holy Apostles, Holy Rosary and St. Agnes schools, and Nazareth Academy.

Sister Petrina earned a bachelor's degree in education (1947); a bachelor of arts degree in English and history (1963); and a master's degree in history (1969).

In 1992 she retired from education. For the past four years, the Lakeview Park resident has worked in convent services and at the Irondequoit Senior Center.

Like a proud parent, **Sister Imelda Wuest, SSJ**, has kept old class pictures, book reports and various memorabilia throughout the years to remember the accomplishments of her students.



The treasures bring special memories to the Olean native. And there is a touching story uncovered from a small note pad.

Brian was a third-grader in Sister Imelda's class at St. Mary's School in Elmira. Just before Christmas in 1981, he gave his teacher a little sign which read, "It takes both the sun and the rain to make a beautiful rainbow." Three days after giving this present, Brian died in a drowning accident.

Sister Imelda mourned the loss of this child, and at the same time, she comforted his classmates and family through her gift

of teaching. She encouraged the students to write letters to Brian and his family.

"The children were beautiful about the whole thing," Sister Imelda said. "I copied all of their letters into this small notebook so that I could always remember their compassion and wisdom."

Sister Imelda gave the original book of letters to Brian's parents, but engendered the establishment of a memorial fund in Brian's memory. To this day, she sends annual contributions to commend his birthday as well as the anniversary of his death.

Above all, Sister Imelda was devoted to her students. Her career in education spanned more than 48 years.

Her first teaching job was at St. Francis Xavier School. She went on to teach in numerous schools including St. Augustine's, Corpus Christi, St. Ambrose, and Holy Rosary, and at St. Joseph's Villa.

She retired in 1987 when she became a driver at the motherhouse on East Avenue. Since last year she has served in congregational service and prayer ministry.

50 years

Sister Marie Concepta Branca, SSJ, has expressed only gratitude on reaching this milestone in her career.



"I have a heart full of gratitude to my God, to my mother, to my congregation, to my family and friends, and to all the children I have taught," she simply said.

Her career, she added, has been a blessing, "... for I have not only taught, but I have been taught by my students. I have learned many lessons in what really counts in life. I am grateful for all who have touched my life."

The Rochester native entered the Sisters of St. Joseph in 1945. Sister Marie Concepta served eight years at Our Lady of Lourdes School, before joining the faculty at Holy Childhood. For the last 40 years, she has contributed to the school both as a teacher and a supervisor of children's programs.

In addition to that work, Sister Marie Concepta has also participated in numerous congregational workshops and summer ministries.

For **Sister Theresa Collins, SSJ**, (formerly Sister Daniel Louise Collins), teaching school and being able to influence young minds has proven rewarding.



"It is wonderful to hear from so many of them and know that they are fine men and women today," the Elmira native said.

Sister Theresa began teaching at St. Francis Xavier School, after receiving her certification from Nazareth Normal. She also taught at St. Mary's, St. Joseph's and St. Pius X schools.

During this time, Sister Theresa earned her bachelor of science degree in education from Nazareth College and a master's degree in Sacred Science from

St. Bonaventure. She also became certified in special education in learning disabilities.

With this later certification, Sister Theresa worked with learning disabled students at St. Pius X School in Chili. In 1986, she became director of the Outreach Program at St. Margaret Mary School. Eight years later she became pastoral associate at St. Stanislaus Parish.

"Moving from the classroom after 38 years was not easy," Sister Theresa admitted. "But the opportunity opened up another door for me."

"God is to us what electricity is to the television set," **Sister Theresa Daniel Knapp, SSJ**, said. "He shows us the whole world."

Sister Theresa Daniel offered this analogy to help express why she believes religious life was right for her.

"Religious life was the only choice for me, because it gave me the right and the opportunity to say, over and over, day after day, that God is generous and merciful," she added. "And his love for us is always there."

Sister Theresa Daniel was born in Dansville. After graduating from Dansville High School in 1943, she worked at the Foster Wheeler Corporation. Two years later, she moved to Rochester to attend Nazareth College.

She began her teaching career with third-graders at St. Monica's School. She went on to teach at Corpus Christi School, Nazareth Academy, and St. Agnes High School.

In 1963, she became the chairman of the business department at St. Agnes High School for four years, after which she entered campus ministry at Rochester Institute of Technology.

Sister Theresa Daniel returned to teaching business at St. Agnes High School in 1972. In addition, she was the director of social activities at the school. Her ministries also included working as a counselor for the Livingston County Manpower Service and as an assistant director of student activities and the community center at Nazareth College.

From 1982 to 1995, the East Avenue resident served as payroll supervisor in the assistant treasurer's office. Sister Theresa Daniel retired last year.

Religious life for **Sister Robert Mary Kosty, SSJ**, was a calling from God with reinforcement from St. Paul.



"We are a consecrated people, a holy people, called to serve him and others," Sister Robert Mary recited from Scripture. "To me, this was the will of God and his will is our peace. I have been very happy in my life as a Sister of St. Joseph."

The Corning native began her teaching career at St. Francis Xavier School. For 27 years she taught elementary school students in Canandaigua, Dansville, Elmira, Rochester, Auburn, Horseheads, and Geneva. Her summer ministries included working in the inner city at Immaculate Conception Parish in

Rochester.

She also participated in such workshops as the Kindergarten Practicum, Christian Social Living Curriculum, and SSJ Federation in St. Louis.

The Nazareth College graduate has served as a clerk in the administrative office at St. Joseph's Hospital in Elmira. She is now the admitting officer at the facility.

Sister Joan Margaret Kunz, SSJ, said, "Among the many blessings of the last 50 years are, first and foremost, all those persons — both within and outside the Congregation — whose love, prayer and encouragement have made it possible for me to grow spiritually and professionally."

"Profoundly aware of how graced my entire life has been, I can only respond with the psalmist, 'What return can I make to the Lord for all that He has given to me?'" (Ps 116:12).

Born in Rochester, Sister Joan Margaret attended Nazareth Academy. After earning a bachelor of arts degree in German and Latin from Nazareth College, she went on to teach at Nazareth Hall, St. Patrick's School in Mt. Morris, and Sacred Heart Cathedral School in Rochester.

In 1957 she received a master's degree in German from Catholic University. She later earned a master's and a doctorate in the sacred doctrine from St. Mary's College.

An assistant professor in the theology department at Nazareth College, Sister Joan Margaret was a member of the Congregation Formation Team. She then served as a professor in the religious studies department at Nazareth College, resuming this post from 1986 to 1992 after a one-year sabbatical at Boston College.

Currently, she serves as a member of the adjunct staff in spirituality ministry.

A Watertown native, **Sister Margaret Charles LaShomb, SSJ**, moved to Rochester to attend Nazareth College.



After receiving a bachelor of arts degree in social studies and Latin from Nazareth College, she taught elementary school students at Corpus Christi, St. Anthony's and Immaculate Conception schools, and St. Joseph's Villa.

Fifteen years later, Sister Margaret Charles joined the refectory staff at the motherhouse. She then became the local treasurer. In 1976 she assumed the post of assistant treasurer general, which she still holds.

"I feel that religious life was right for me because each day of these past 50 years has been a source of inner peace and joy," the East Avenue resident said. "I try to live out my baptismal commitment through my vows, prayer, community life, and service to others."

Sister Mary Lynch, SSJ, (formerly Sister Mary de Porres) has been given the opportunity to share in people's lives from their hopes and dreams to their sorrow

and pain.

"As the years have flown by, I have become more and more aware of the blessing this vocation has been," Sister Mary offered. "God's will and its fulfillment in my life have brought me great joy, peace, and fulfillment."

The Rochester native entered the Sisters of St. Joseph in 1945. Four years later she earned a bachelor's degree in mathematics and French from Nazareth College, then returned to her high school alma mater, Nazareth Academy, to teach mathematics.

Sister Mary earned a master of science degree in mathematics and a master's degree in theology from the University of Notre Dame. Sister Mary taught at Nazareth College, St. Agnes High School and Nazareth Academy.

She became the religious education coordinator at St. Patrick's in Corning, and four years later, assumed the same position at St. Joseph's in Penfield. In 1978, Sister Mary became the consultant for religious education in the diocesan Department of Religious Education.

Now a spiritual director, she has served at the Emmaus House of Prayer and the SSJ Spirituality Ministry Center. She has also offered spiritual direction at the motherhouse along with weekend retreats at the Notre Dame Retreat House.

Sister Remigia McHenry, SSJ, is still moved by memories of her time as a medical and surgical nurse in Selma, Ala.



"It was a real transformation for me," she said of spending eight years there. "I learned so much about people as well as myself."

Sister Remigia openly admitted that she was unfamiliar with other cultures when she waded to Selma.

"I witnessed poverty and so many forms of injustice," she said. "I witnessed their kindness and gratitude. It was a great grace just to be able to care for the people."

After returning from Alabama in 1957, Sister Remigia went back to school, earning a bachelor of science degree in nursing and a master's degree in nursing education from Catholic University.

The Rochester native joined the staff of St. Ann's Home where she served as the medical and social coordinator. One year later, she was sent to St. Joseph's Hospital as a clinical instructor, then the director of nursing education. In 1973, Sister Remigia became the director of the department of education and school of nursing at the hospital for 15 years.

Since 1990, Sister Remigia has been the resident nurse at the motherhouse.

The past 50 years have provided **Sister M. Juliana O'Hara, SSJ**, with an opportunity to serve God's people, young and



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