

MILESTONES

32 Sisters of St. Joseph celebrate jubilees this year

This year marks a time of reflection and joy for 32 Sisters of St. Joseph of Rochester, celebrating their anniversaries with the order.

Their commitment and service to God and the Diocese of Rochester leaves us humbled and awed. They will celebrate their anniversaries during a special liturgy at the motherhouse on Saturday, May 4, at 1:30 p.m., followed by a reception.

75 years



Chance encounters with her young students proved to be one of Sister Mary Martha Reeder's favorite memories as a teacher. Meeting her on the street, students often ran up to her, excited to report on their progress.

Sister Mary Martha still smiles, "I was always proud to say that school was a happy learning place where children grew to love God and each other. I loved what I was doing, and wanted to help them become the best they could be."

Sister Mary Martha was just 17 years old when she entered the Sisters of St. Joseph. She served in elementary education for most of her religious life, working at Sacred Heart, Immaculate Conception, St. Augustine, Holy Apostles and St. Stanislaus in Rochester; St. John the Evangelist in Spencerport; and St. John the Evangelist in Greece. The Antrim, Pa., native has since retired and now focuses on prayer ministry.



Sister Marie Augustine Smalt has had a chemical reaction to religious life — sort of. She worked in the chemistry department at Nazareth College from 1941 to 1988 as a professor and department chair.

"I loved my work," the 75-year jubilarian said. "And now I can appreciate the loyalty of so many of my former students."

One former student, Sister Maria Kellner, recalls of her teacher, "Sister Marie Augustine was my professor and also my sponsor. One thought she instilled in me was, 'Do things not just for God, but with God,' making me aware of the Trinity's presence within me. She had great devotion to the Trinity."

The oldest of six children, Sister Marie Augustine grew up in Rochester, and graduated from Nazareth Academy. She went on to earn several advanced chemistry degrees. She has been retired and serving in prayer ministry since 1988.



Her parents named her Bertha. The Sisters of St. Joseph named her Sister Angela Therese. Children in Mt. Morris called her 'Bouncy.' And the late Bishop Joseph L. Hogan called her 'Bubbles.'

"Such a line up of nicknames has given me 75 joyful years of religious life," Sister Angela Sutula (Sister Angela Therese) said. "I have had so much fun, and enjoyed all the people in my life. I'm so grateful."

Sister Angela devoted most of her career to education, teaching elementary school. She taught at St. Stanislaus in Rochester, St.

Alphonsus in Auburn, St. Casimir in Elmira, St. Paul in Oswego and St. Patrick in Mt. Morris.

In 1974, she became the pastoral assistant at St. Patrick in Mt. Morris, where she served for the next 11 years. She went on to do the same job at St. Joseph's in Wayland from 1985 to 1994. She retired in 1994 and now focuses on prayer ministry.

70 years



Sister Alma Joseph Bauman said that for 70 years, she has valued the "peace" she has found in religious life.

"Each year has been so peaceful," she said from St. Joseph's Convent Infirmary. "It has meant the most to me."

Sister Alma Joseph entered the Sisters of St. Joseph in 1931 and taught briefly at Immaculate Conception in Ithaca. In 1934, she changed ministries and served as a secretary at Nazareth Normal School and at the Fathers of St. Edmund mission in Selma, Ala. She went on to serve for 24 years as the congregational secretary for three of the order's presidents. She later served as a consultant to the congregational treasurer. Although she retired in 1988, she maintains devoted interest in all the activities of the congregation.



Sister Catherine Teresa Martin always pictured her life in the field of education.

"This would be my way of fulfilling my desire to further spread the kingdom of God in our world," she said.

She did teach, but a number of other ministries followed.

Her years of teaching included Ss. Peter and Paul's in Elmira; Sacred Heart, Our Lady of Lourdes and St. Monica in Rochester; St. Mary's in Auburn; and Immaculate Conception in Ithaca.

After her years of teaching, Sister Catherine Teresa served as a novice director for the congregation and then as a student counselor for St. Joseph's Hospital School of Nursing in Elmira. From 1969-83, she served in the business office of the Edmundite Mission in Selma, Ala. Since 1983, she has served as an associate editor for the congregation's internal newsletter.

As Sister Catherine Teresa reflected on her varied career, she said it "has made for an interesting and happy life."



Sister Mary Clarice Fischette is most proud of being able to say "yes" whenever the congregation asked her to serve in a ministry.

"I loved all the ministries I have been sent to," the Clyde native said. "There was never a time I didn't want to be a Sister of St. Joseph. I applied a saying my father had said to us as children, 'If you show appreciation to God, He will take care of you.' I tried to implement this philosophy in my life, and God has helped me much."

Sister Mary Clarice worked in education for more than 40 years at such schools as St. Augustine, Nazareth Hall and St. Theodore, Rochester; Nativity of the Blessed Virgin Mary, Brockport; and St. Mary, Elmira.

From 1974-80, she coordinated the volunteers at School of the Holy Childhood, and spent the next 15 years working at the motherhouse. Although she retired in 1995, she continues to be active at the motherhouse and in prayer ministry.



Sister Helen Gray (Sister Helen Agnes) enjoys keeping in touch with her former students, some of whom are now retiring themselves.

"I love to hear about their lives," she said. "Many share photos of

their children or grandchildren. Others recall stories or events while they were in my class years ago. It's such a joy, and I am so proud of the friendships I have made."

Sister Helen devoted 45 of her 70 years of religious life to teaching. She taught at St. John the Evangelist in Spencerport; Nazareth Academy, Holy Apostles, Our Lady of Lourdes, Blessed Sacrament and Guardian Angels in Rochester; St. Paul in Oswego; St. Mary in Dansville; St. Patrick in Seneca Falls; and St. Joseph in Wayland.

After serving in education, Sister Helen was a pastoral visitor at St. Ann's Home for one year and a cook in the convent there (1979-89). She has since retired.



One young student proved to be a challenge for Sister Agnes Mary Linehan.

"He was always in trouble," the Geneva native remembered. "I just told him what I expected, and I got it."

Sister Agnes Mary recalls this one student, because after their discussion, the two became friends.

"I love sports, and we often talked about different teams," she said. "He just thought that was great. He often came to visit me even years later."

A teacher for more than 50 years, Sister Agnes Mary served at Sacred Heart, Our Lady of Perpetual Help and St. Joseph's Villa in Rochester; St. Patrick in Seneca Falls; St. Patrick in Mt. Morris; and Immaculate Conception in Ithaca. She retired in 1986 and lived in Ithaca prior to moving to the motherhouse in 1996.

She now enjoys special time with her family and focuses on her prayer ministry.



A chance performance early in her religious career opened up a new ministry for Sister Anna Louise Staub.

At a First Communion service, she was playing the organ while her fifth-grade boys from Nazareth Hall sang. This performance impressed her superior so much that Sister Anna Louise was soon assigned to teach vocal music.

For the next 28 years, Sister Anna Louise taught at St. Monica, Nazareth College and Holy Rosary in Rochester. During this time, she also served as the music supervisor for the Sisters of St. Joseph.

"It was a great joy to hear children lift their voices in song," Sister Anna Louise said.

She became principal at St. Augustine in 1966 and at St. John the Evangelist in Greece in 1972. In 1978, she returned to teaching music at St. Jerome's in East Rochester.

Today, Sister Anna Louise focuses on another art. A poet, she has had two books, *Heart Talk* and *Play With Me*, published by the congregation.

"The love of God has filled my life with joy and serenity," Sister Anna Louise added. "I hope through the short span of years left to me that my love for him may fuse our spirits with deeper bonds of unity. That I may be eager and waiting for his final embrace is my daily prayer."



One of the biggest rewards of religious life for Sister Mary Patrick Fleeton was having the opportunity to teach and encourage so many young children to practice their faith.

"I love children," she said. "I hope I was able

to help in some way to bring them closer to God."

Born in Ireland, Sister Mary Patrick dedicated 40 years to elementary education, teaching at St. Stephen in Geneva; Immaculate Conception in Ithaca; Immaculate Conception, Blessed Sacrament, Sacred Heart, Holy Rosary, St. Anthony of Padua, Christ the King, Holy Apostles, St. Bridget and St. Andrew in Rochester; Holy Trinity in Webster; St. Francis de Sales in Geneva; and Ss. Peter and Paul in Elmira. She then became a pastoral assistant at Holy Ghost in Rochester (1973-79) and St. Gregory in Marion (1979-80). In 1980, she went to work in congregational services and retired in 1996.



Sister Agnes Cecilia Troy has always depended on and been sustained by the early inspiration of her vocation.

"How well I remember!" she said. "As a senior in high school, I sat reading in our family's

living room, and I was struck forcibly by the words I read, *Nihil sum*, which means "I am nothing." Her resolution followed to belong to God alone and be a Sister of St. Joseph.

Through the years, Sister Agnes Cecilia has accepted the challenges and assignments she has been given by the congregation — elementary school teacher at Nazareth Hall, opening Our Mother of Sorrows School, principal at Nazareth Academy (1953-63) and president of the congregation (1963-75). As the latter, she led the Sisters of St. Joseph through the challenging Vatican II transition.

"I thank God for the graces given to me to meet those challenges," Sister Agnes Cecilia said of her work.

From 1975-84, Sister Agnes Cecilia served as the coordinator for the motherhouse. After that, she served 13 years as department head for congregational services. She retired in 1997 and now focuses on prayer ministry.

"Now, my life is filled with prayer for our congregation and for the needs of the world, and always, thanks to God," she concluded.



The Sisters of St. Joseph prayed for Sister Louise Dolan (Sister Anacleto) before her birth. Years later when she entered, a sister asked her who she was and where she was from.

"I told her and the sister said, 'You're the child we prayed for your safe delivery,'" Sister Louise recalled. "Those prayers may account for the feeling I always had for the sisters, and perhaps for my vocation."

Born in Auburn, Sister Louise entered the Sisters of St. Joseph in 1931 after graduating from Nazareth Academy. She spent 39 years in education, teaching at St. Monica, Nazareth Hall and Nazareth Academy in Rochester and DeSales High School in Geneva.

In 1971, she became director of education at St. Joseph's Hospital in Elmira, where she later served as employee development coordinator. She is now assistant to the activity director in the skilled nursing unit.

"I enjoyed my years of teaching and later my hospital work," Sister Louise said. "Each was challenging in its own way, and I enjoyed being of service."

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**Congratulations From
Holy Family
Catholic Community**

**Sacred Heart - Perkinsville
St. Joseph's - Wayland
St. Mary's - Dansville
St. Pius V - Cohocton**

Congratulations

*to all for your embrace of
God's call to the
vocation of Religious Life,
Ordained Priesthood
and of marriage and family*

FROM
**ST. JOSEPH'S CHURCH
WEEDSPORT**