

35 SSJs celebrate jubilees this year

The following Sisters of St. Joseph who are celebrating 75-, 70-, 60- and 50-year anniversaries in 2003 reflect on their ministries in their own words.

75 YEARS



Sister Edwina Hester (Sister Edwina Teresa) entered the Sisters of St. Joseph from St. Aloysius Parish in Auburn. She taught at St. Mary, Canandaigua; St. Patrick, Seneca Falls; St. Joseph, Wayland; St. Anthony, Elmira; and St. Ambrose and Nazareth Academy, both in Rochester. She presently volunteers in the congregation's archive department.

"Leaving my 'family' home in Auburn, 75 years ago, to connect with my incredible new life, was not a happy journey. However, the more I explored and examined the values of a religious life, by listening, trusting and praying, the idea of it seemed to be the 'way to go.' Seventy-five years has been a joyful, privileged span of time, a great blessing for me. Uncertainty became a happy, fruitful and pleasant way of service to God and to the congregation."



Sister Marion Patricia Costello joined the Sisters of St. Joseph from St. Patrick Cathedral Parish in Rochester and currently serves in the prayer ministry.

Her teaching assignments included St. Mary, Canandaigua; St. Paul, Oswego; DeSales High School, Geneva; Elmira Catholic High School; Mt. Carmel High School, Auburn; and St. Agnes High School and Nazareth Hall in Rochester.

"The majority of my career was spent teaching high school French. I always wanted to be a teacher and I loved working with young people! After I left teaching in 1977, I spent 18 happy years living at the motherhouse where I acted as receptionist and helped in the Treasurer General's office. In 1995 I retired to our infirmary where I have loved having more time for prayer and reflection. My family and friends can all testify that through these years of my retirement I have established quite a reputation as a pizza gourmet."

Sister Rosemary Burgio (Sister Rose Bernard) taught elementary grades at St. Mary, Dansville; Ss.

Peter & Paul, Elmira; St. Patrick, Seneca Falls; and St. Mary Our Mother, Horseheads. Her assignments in Rochester included Blessed Sacrament, Our Lady of Good Counsel, St. Ambrose and Holy Rosary. She joined the congregation from St. Francis Xavier Parish in Rochester and currently serves in the prayer ministry.



"For my very first mission, I was sent to Dansville and I loved it — the people, my students and the beautiful hills. I loved teaching. I remember Holy

Rosary and Our Lady of Good Counsel Schools in Rochester as two ministries that were particularly fulfilling. I am proud to be a part of this congregation. All the different gifts blend, and those gifts continue on in the congregation. That is what helps to continue this great congregation of the Love of God."

70 YEARS

With the exception of Sister Lynch, who is a volunteer at the motherhouse, the following sisters currently serve in the congregation's prayer ministry.



After joining the Sisters of St. Joseph from Holy Rosary Parish in Rochester, **Sister Benedicta Redmond** served in the education ministry at

Blessed Sacrament and Corpus Christi in Rochester; St. Agnes, Avon; St. Mary, Canandaigua; St. Paul, Oswego; and St. Jerome, East Rochester.

"I was happy when I entered after high school and I'm still happy to be a Sister of St. Joseph. It hasn't always been easy, but I have managed. I was missioned in many nice places over the years, but St. Mary's in Canandaigua was the best. I was there twice for a total of 38 years. I came to know the children and their families very well. Many of them still write and visit me regularly at St. Joseph's Convent Infirmary."

Sister Bernadette McNeil (Sister Bernadette de Lourdes) entered the congregation from Corpus Christi Parish in Rochester. She taught in Rochester at Blessed Sacrament, Our Mother of Sorrows and St. Joseph's Villa; Immaculate Conception in Ithaca; and St. Mary in Elmira.



"I knew from my earliest years that I wanted to be a sister. Looking back over my 70 years in religious life, I am thankful for all the dedicated sisters who have touched my life and especially grateful to God for my vocation to the Sisters of St. Joseph."

EDITOR'S NOTE: Sister McNeil died April 29 as this issue was being prepared.



Sister Catherine Quigley (Sister John Joseph), a native of Immaculate Conception Parish in Rochester, taught at St. Patrick Cathedral School, Corpus Christi, Nazareth Hall, St. Ambrose and Blessed Sacrament in Rochester; St. John the Evangelist in Greece; and St. Francis de Sales, Geneva.

"The Immaculate Conception was always our parish. My mother and father were married there and wore a path to the baptismal font where six girls and three boys were baptized. Year after year there was a Quigley boy or girl receiving a sacrament for the first time. Now, I am the last one and have many beautiful memories of the days gone by. Happily, God had given me many nieces and nephews who have brought much love into my life."



Sister Dorothy Cooney (Sister Anna Gertrude) entered the Sisters of St. Joseph from St. Augustine Parish in Rochester. Her education ministry took her to Sacred Heart, Blessed Sacrament, St. Thomas More, Guardian Angels, St. Francis Xavier, Holy Redeemer, Christ the King and Nazareth Hall, all in Rochester; St. Francis de Sales, Geneva; St. Anthony, Elmira; Nativity of the Blessed Virgin Mary, Brockport; and St. Mary, Canandaigua.

"Patience is the characteristic virtue I learned growing up in my family of nine siblings. This quality served me well during my career in education, which spanned 60 years and brought me to 12 different schools within the diocese. I am very grateful for my family and for

having followed my sister, Sister Anne Elizabeth Cooney, into the Congregation of the Sisters of St. Joseph."



Sister Marie Lawrence Mayer joined the Sisters of St. Joseph from Corpus Christi Parish in Rochester. She taught at St. Ambrose, Sacred Heart and

Nazareth Academy in Rochester and at St. Alphonsus in Auburn.

"Why did I decide to spend my life in a special way with Christ, my Lord? No doubt the seed was planted by the sisters of my youth and their questioning encouragement. During high school the seed was further nourished and grew into a sturdy sapling I would become as a Sister. But where to go? My desire to be a teacher prompted me to select the Sisters of St. Joseph, a great teaching order. This choice led to many happy years spent in classrooms, the greater part spent at Nazareth Academy. God's goodness has been with me wherever I have been, and for this I shall be forever grateful."



Becoming a Sister of St. Joseph from Sacred Heart of Jesus Parish in Perkinsville, **Sister Marie Xavier Fox** taught at St. Aloysius, Auburn; St. Mary, Canandaigua; St. Stephen, Geneva; St. John the Evangelist in Greece; and in Rochester at Holy Apostles, Holy Rosary and Corpus Christi. She also served as sacristan and pastoral visitor at St. Ann's Home.

"I remember I was afraid of stepping out into life but, when it was time for 'vocation,' I didn't have any fear at all! Growing up I spent two years living in Perkinsville, where I saw the sisters in school and in the convent. I knew it was the place for me! I was a teacher at first, and I enjoyed helping the little ones! I did this until 1960 when I went to St. Ann's Home. For almost 40 years I lived and worked there as sacristan and pastoral visitor. It was wonderful to bring peace and joy to those who were lonely, sick and abandoned. I will always remember and be grateful for my years there."

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