



St. Anne Province Center
Melbourne, Kentucky
November 7, 2021

SISTER RITA C. BRENNAN
was called into eternal life.

Born October 1, 1929 in Covington, Kentucky, Sr. Rita C. Brennan entered eternal life on November 6, 2021 at Holy Family Home. She was ninety-two years old and a professed member of the Congregation of Divine Providence for sixty-seven years.

Rita Celine was the fifth of eleven children born to David John and Mary Brennan. She is preceded in death by her brothers David, Thomas, James, Richard, and Philip and her sisters Margaret Schulte, Clare Baumann, and Jane. She is survived by her brother Joseph, her sister Marian, and nieces and nephews.

Sr. Rita received her early education from the Benedictine Sisters and the Sisters of Charity of Nazareth. She attributed her vocation to religious life to the deep faith and trust in God that her parents exhibited and to their loving care and support. Sister became acquainted with the Sisters of Divine Providence through contacts that her brothers had with them in college and at the Chancery in Covington. She was a member of the Sodality when Fr. Ed Baumann was named the director. He offered to take the members who were interested in religious life on a tour of the motherhouses in the diocese. Sr. Rita experienced a deep inner peace and calm when they visited in Melbourne. She was struck by the simplicity and poverty of the convent and found the sisters joyful and charming. Responding to a strong desire for an active prayer life and spiritual development, Sister entered St. Anne Convent on September 15, 1952. She made her first profession of vows on August 29, 1954 and final vows on August 29, 1959.

After her first profession of vows, Sr. Rita taught mainly junior high students for twenty-eight years. During the same time, she completed her course work for an A.B. degree from Villa Madonna College (now Thomas More University) and an M.Ed. from Xavier University. She was an excellent teacher and a kind, gentle disciplinarian. In Kentucky Sister taught at St. Francis de Sales School in Newport from 1954 to 1958 and at St. Aloysius School in Covington from 1958 to 1959. Then she taught at Assumption School in Mt. Healthy, Ohio from 1959 to 1961. Sr. Rita was missioned to Maryland where she taught in two schools: Our Lady of Sorrows School in Takoma Park from 1961 to 1963 and St. Louis School in Clarksville from 1963 to 1967. She returned to Kentucky and to St. Aloysius School from 1967 to 1969. From 1969 to 1982, Sister served as principal and teacher at St. Cecilia School in Independence.

Under the guidance of the Holy Spirit and through the intervention of her sister Margaret Schulte, Sr. Rita began her second ministry as a DRE from 1982 to 1986. Margaret and her husband Elmer had been long time members of Fort Belvoir Catholic Parish in Virginia. They

heard the pastor Fr. Fleming put out a plea for a qualified religious educator to direct the CCD program and alerted Sr. Rita of the opening. Sister accepted the position because of the challenge it offered her to be of service to the total parish community and the opportunity for team ministry.

In 1986, The Tribunal of the Diocese of Covington began a search among the religious communities for a sister to be trained in Canon Law to serve as an associate judge in an ecclesiastical court. Sr. Rita expressed interest and was awarded a scholarship to study at the Catholic University of America in Washington, D.C. She earned the degree of Licentiate in Canon Law and served as a tribunal judge in Covington from 1988 to 1995.

Next, Sr. Rita took a three-month sabbatical, but continued to be of service. She volunteered at Providence Home in San Antonio, Texas. There the staff cared for infants and children with HIV. She experienced the life/death reality of the involved families as they coped with grief.

In her final years of active ministry, Sr. Rita was a part-time tribunal advocate for the Diocese of Covington. She also served in Hosea House in Newport, Kentucky. Sister was the secretarial assistant and the volunteer coordinator until her retirement for health reasons in 2007.

In her long life, Sr. Rita won the lasting esteem of all who knew her. She was gifted and generous in her life for others. Sister was conscientious and devoted to serving God. She was known to be a great organizer, friendly, humorous, and talented. Sr. Rita loved a good time. She enjoyed watching Reds baseball and playing Uno.

In her reflections Sr. Rita expressed her gratitude for the support of family and friends. She was deeply grateful for the daily challenges she experienced in discovering the Presence of Providence in her every day life.

In thanksgiving for our dear Sr. Rita and for her witness as a loving, joyful woman of Providence and as a woman of prayer, compassion, and loving service throughout her religious life, let us entrust her to the care of our Provident God.

United in God's gracious Providence,

Sister Barbara Patrick, CDP for
Sister Barbara Rohe, CDP, Provincial

Due to the coronavirus, there will be no wake or visitation. The Mass and burial will be private. At a later date, there will be a memorial celebration of Sr. Rita's life.

Mass of Christian Burial: Wednesday, November 10, 2021 at 9:00 A.M.
 Immaculate Conception Chapel, Melbourne

Burial in the Convent Cemetery, Melbourne, Kentucky