

Sr. Rita Marie Hettish, R.S.M.

Early years of living in a “God-centered family” and the example of the Sisters of Mercy who taught her influenced Sister Rita Marie Hettish, RSM, to enter religious life.

She was taught in grades 1-12 by the Sisters of Mercy at St. Adrian in Delancey. Through the years, she says, their influence permeated her life.

“The Sisters of Mercy have always been an integral part of my life,” Sister Rita Marie says. “Having been educated by them, I witnessed their devotion and dedication to education and the ministry of spreading God’s word and doing his work among us.”

In celebrating her 60th jubilee, she also recalls the love and inspiration of her parents.

“Days began with Mass and ended with a nightly parental blessing,” she recalls. “They always encouraged us to acknowledge God’s call and strive to become our best in whatever our future vocations might be.”

When she was a junior in high school, she realized that God’s call would lead her to the Sisters of Mercy and to teaching.

She taught at a number of Catholic schools in the Diocese of Erie as well as the Diocese of Pittsburgh.

Sister Rita Marie and Sister Mary Louis Oslick, RSM, were the last Sisters of Mercy in full-time Catholic elementary school work in the diocese. Sister Rita Marie retired in 2006 from St. George School in Erie after nearly 50 years of teaching at various Catholic elementary schools, bringing to an end the long history of the Sisters of Mercy in diocesan parochial schools.

However, she didn’t stay retired for long. Later that year, she joined

60 years



My Inspiration: “As our foundress, Catherine McAuley would often say, ‘You must give glory to God not only by sanctifying your own soul but also by attracting others by word and example.’” – *Sister Rita Marie Hettish, RSM*

Teacher:

St. George, Erie
St. Catherine of Siena, DuBois
St. Patrick, Franklin
St. Michael, Greenville
Our Lady of Fatima, Farrell
Immaculate Conception,
Brookville
St. Titus, Titusville
Faculty:
Mercy Center of the Arts, Erie

the faculty of Mercy Center of the Arts in Erie where she facilitates the creative exploration of the program.

Also in 2006, Pope Benedict XVI named her as a recipient of the Papal Cross Pro Ecclesia et Pontifice (For Church and Pope).

She calls her 60 years of preparing children for the sacraments of reconciliation and the Eucharist her greatest privilege.

“The rewards of this ministry are immeasurable,” she says.

She considers the call of Christ in the Gospel to “Come, follow me,” to be her call, too.

“This is a personal call for me to strive daily, take up the challenge, put aside worldly interests, choose to live for him and build up his church in our world,” Sister Rita Marie says. “Lord, thank you for calling me.”

Looking back on her years as a Sister of Mercy, she says, “I appreciate being afforded the time to possess the inner peace of knowing that I can devote myself to the service of God and others without outside distractions, and the joy of living out and passing on the legacy of our foundress, Catherine McAuley.”

Sr. Mary Carol Hoke, S.S.J.

In her ministry as a teacher throughout the Diocese of Erie, Sister Mary Carol Hoke, SSJ, has passed on what she has learned.

“My mother’s prayers and the example of love and caring interest I experienced from the Sisters of St. Joseph and the dedicated parish priests during my time as a student at St. Brigid led me to the religious life,” Sister Mary Carol says.

A native of St. Brigid Parish in Meadville, she is a graduate of Meadville High School and St. Brigid School. She entered the Sisters of St. Joseph in 1951 after working as a secretary for the Pennsylvania Department of

60 years



Principal:

St. Joseph, Erie
St. Brigid, Meadville

Teacher:

St. John, Erie
St. Andrew, Erie
St. Patrick, Erie
St. Joseph, Erie
St. Leo, Ridgway
St. Francis, Clearfield
St. Bernard, Bradford
St. Mary, Reynoldsville
Seton School, Meadville
St. Agatha, Meadville

Librarian:

Seton School, Meadville
Sisters of St. Joseph

Rectory clerk:

St. Agatha, Meadville

Clerk:

Saint Vincent Hospital, Erie

Highways for more than four years.

“During those years, I went to Mass and received Communion daily and I believe it was during this time that I heard the call,” Sister Mary Carol says.

She received her bachelor’s degree in elementary education from Villa Maria College in Erie and was certified in elementary library science at Edinboro University.

“My early ministry took me to several parishes outside of the city of Erie where I met many dedicated parents and children who were a delight to work with,” Sister Mary Carol recalls.

She returned to Erie where she served as principal of St. Joseph School for many years.

“I was then fortunate to minister to my home parishes in Meadville,” she says.

After serving as teacher and librarian for 24 years at Seton Catholic School in Meadville, Sister Carol retired to the Sisters of St. Joseph Community Living Center in Erie where she ministers as the congregation’s librarian.

In her office at the library, Sister Mary Carol meets and greets everyone with her pleasant smile and her willingness to serve. She loves being surrounded by books of all genres and readily says, “It’s a delightful place in which to minister.”

My Inspiration: “Psalm 27 is one of my favorite psalms because it teaches me how to trust in God entirely, regardless of what happens.” – *Sister Mary Carol Hoke, SSJ*

Sr. Miriam Mashank, O.S.B.

For Sister Miriam Mashank, OSB, reaching for the impossible gives meaning to life, especially when trying to help the poor.

She says her ministry at St. Benedict Education Center (SBEC) in Erie provides her with moment after moment of opportunity which she tries hard to seize.

"Each day I see men and women at the center struggling to find a way out of poverty for themselves and their children," Sister Miriam says. "Witnessing their struggle and knowing that my way of life has far fewer challenges than that of many people keeps me centered on the thought that maybe only the impossible is worth trying."

Remembering this, she says, gives meaning to her life.

Sister Miriam has served as the executive director of St. Benedict Education Center since 1995.

SBEC, located in the former St. Benedict Academy in downtown Erie, assists 2,900 people each year with intensive case management, academic remediation, job readiness preparation, job development and job placement assistance. Under the auspices of Pennsylvania's Department of Welfare, SBEC's programs help move families toward economic self-sufficiency.

She stepped back from the center's executive director position as of June 30, but she is not stepping back from work. Sister Miriam remains committed to making life better for the "invisible poor" of Erie, helping parents, children and immigrants at SBEC through a variety of special projects.

"It's an inspiration for me to hear of their struggles and then to see them succeed," she says.



Teacher:

St. Gregory, North East
St. Mary, Erie
St. Joseph, Oil City
St. Stephen, Oil City
St. Benedict Academy, Erie
Venango Catholic High School,
Oil City

Mercyhurst College, Erie

Benedictine Sisters of Erie:

Monastic Council
Director of development
St. Benedict Education Center,
executive director

My Inspiration: "I am inspired by the strong social justice message from the prophet Micah, 'To act justly and to love mercy and to walk humbly with your God (Micah 6:8).' I also enjoy the canticles of Isaiah, which we sing often in our morning praise."

— Sister Miriam Mashank, OSB

Sister Miriam received her bachelor's degree in biology and mathematics from Mercyhurst College and her master's in college counseling from Boston University. A native of St. Joseph Parish in Sharon, she entered the Benedictine Sisters of Erie in 1949 and professed her first vows in July 1951. She took her final

vows in August 1954.

Before beginning her ministry at St. Benedict Education Center, Sister Miriam was primarily engaged in secondary education and various directorships, both at Mercyhurst College and with the Benedictine Sisters of Erie.

In March, Sister Miriam was recognized by the *Erie Times-News* as one of Erie's "Extraordinary Women" as part of Women's History Month.

"We've got to lead with heart, not just with our heads," Sister Miriam says. "We've got to have the courage and empathy to follow our dreams. An extraordinary woman is one who can lead and sees leadership as an opportunity to serve and to make dreams come true."

BEST WISHES TO THE FOLLOWING JUBILARIANS:

SR. BERNARDINE PAIS, SSSJ
SR. LEONELLA GINGENBACH, SSSJ
SR. MARY CAROL HOKE, SSSJ
SR. MARIE ONUFFER, SSSJ
REV. ELDON K. SOMERS
REV. ROBERT P. FEDOR
REV. MSGR. H. DESMOND MCGEE
REV. V. DAVID FORADORI

ST. BERNARD, BRADFORD

ST. JULIA PARISH IN ERIE WISHES
TO RECOGNIZE AND CONGRATULATE

SR. MARIA O'CONNOR, RSM
(R.C.I.A. DIRECTOR)
AND DEACON
JERRY PETERSON

THANK YOU FOR YOUR
DEDICATED SERVICE!

Fr. Justin Pino and the people of
St. Joseph Parish in Oil City
would like to congratulate the following:

Fr. Walter Packard
Sr. Carol Hoke, SSSJ
Msgr. Henry Schauerman
Sr. Mary Lou Kownacki, OSB

Sr. Joan McCabe, R.S.M.

Sister Joan McCabe, RSM, considers herself a “walking nun.”

The term is how Catherine McAuley, foundress of the Sisters of Mercy, looked at her sisters as they ministered to the poor, sick and uneducated.

“It tells us that Catherine centered her ministry uplifting the human person, a goal that is achieved where mercy is found feeding the hungry, educating those who want to learn and offering comfort to the sick and dying,” Sister Joan says.

Sister Joan, who is celebrating her 60th jubilee, experienced the charism of the Sisters of Mercy as a high school student at Mercyhurst Seminary, Erie, now Mercyhurst Prep.

She remembers the care the sisters had for her and her five siblings after her parents’ death.

“Because of the untimely death of my parents, I, with my sisters and brother, had a support system and was surrounded by sisters who offered understanding, education and direction,” Sister Joan recalls.

She said life for her and her siblings may have turned out differently had the sisters not supported her family. They provided direction and their

My Inspiration: “Getting to know Catherine McAuley through her writings, I came to believe in her approach to ministry and to prayer.” – Sister Joan McCabe, RSM



Teacher:

Ss. Cosmas and Damian,
Punxsutawney
Immaculate Conception, Brookville
St. Titus, Titusville
St. Michael, Greenville
St. Walburga, Titusville
St. Catherine of Siena, DuBois
St. George, Erie
Mercyhurst Prep, Erie

Religious education:

St. Luke, Erie

Theology professor:

Gannon University, Erie

Sisters of Mercy:

Infirmiry nurse and administrator

education at Mercyhurst Seminary was not interrupted.

“I am sure it was this influence on me and on my life that I sought to ‘walk the talk’ of mercy,” she says.

As a Sister of Mercy, she taught in elementary schools in the dioceses of Erie and Pittsburgh for more than 30 years. Also, she taught theology at Gannon University in Erie and religion at Mercyhurst Prep.

Earning her registered nurse diploma in 1988, she worked as a nurse at several Erie area nursing homes. In 1992, she earned a nursing degree from Gannon University.

Today, she is a nurse and administrator at the Sisters of Mercy Health Care Center, the infirmary at the motherhouse in Erie, where she has served since 1994.

Sister Joan says she has strong hope for the future of the Sisters of Mercy.

“Confidently, I say, together we will continue to witness to God’s plan of mercy as ‘walking nuns’ in the ministry of caring for the infirmed and those who find God’s love in Houses of Mercy (homes for women and children) and in our call to justice for all,” she says.

Sr. Mary Gertrude McElhinny, S.C.

Sister Mary Gertrude McElhinny, SC, has been a fixture at St. Michael Parish and School in Greenville for the past 33 years.

She enjoyed teaching for 13 years at St. Michael School. Then in 1992, she began her second ministry as a pastoral minister in the parish’s Care and Concern program at both St. Michael and its mission church of St. Margaret in Jamestown.

“My years here at St. Michael and St. Margaret have made me a big part of this wonderful parish family,” Sister Mary Gertrude says.

She says she has been inspired by the faith of the priests who have served in Greenville over the years.

“Our priests here at St. Michael faithfully continue each day to teach and instill the great love of God, the Blessed Mother and all the saints in our people,” she says.

As Sister Mary Gertrude looks back over her 60 years as a Mother Seton Sister of Charity, she can’t believe where the years have gone.

“Teaching for 38 years in the Catholic schools of Greensburg, Pittsburgh, Johnstown, South Greensburg and Greenville kept me busy just keeping up with the many large classes,” Sister Mary Gertrude says. “Each class different, each class a joy—most of the time,” she says with a smile.

Her first full teaching assignment began in 1953 with 74 first graders at St. John the Baptist School in Pittsburgh. There



Pastoral minister:

St. Michael, Greenville
St. Margaret, Jamestown

Teacher:

St. Michael, Greenville
St. John the Baptist, Pittsburgh
Immaculate Conception, Irwin
St. Paul, Greensburg
St. Bruno, South Greensburg
Our Lady of Mercy, Johnstown

Principal:

St. Bruno, South Greensburg
Our Lady of Mercy, Johnstown

were four sets of twins in the class, and two of the sets, although not related, had the same names—Loretta and Lorraine Szymanski and Loretta and Lorraine Szymanski.

Sister Mary Gertrude’s vocation was fostered mostly by her parents and family, especially by her mother’s daily prayers. Like so many large families in those days—she is one of 10 children—she says fostering religious vocations was foremost in her family’s faith-filled lives.

A native of Pittsburgh, her family moved into the Diocese of Erie in 1945 where she was a member of St. Philip Parish in Linesville. She was encouraged to attend retreats at Seton Hill where she says, “I fell in love with the sisters.”

Her sister, Sister Mary Joseph McElhinny, SC, from very early childhood wanted to be a Sister of Charity. She already had two aunts and a number of cousins in the community. They were also taught by the Sisters of Charity at St. Mary Magdalen School in Homestead.

Sister Mary Gertrude says her vocation became apparent in 1951 when she entered the convent, just a year after her sister.

“God knew my heart’s desire when he gave me my Sister of Charity vocation,” she says.

In 1978, she asked for permission to minister in Greenville.

“And I’ve been here since,” she says.

My Inspiration: “The charity of Christ urges us.” – From the inscription around the Sisters of Charity emblem

Sr. Patricia McGreevy, O.S.B.

Sister Patricia McGreevy, OSB, first encountered the Benedictine Sisters of Erie when she studied music under them. They helped open the school at St. Stephen Parish in Oil City, and Sister Jean Lavin was her music teacher.

"My vocation was nurtured by my family and through my association with the sisters," Sister Patricia says. "We were very close and attached to the sisters. They were good role models for young girls."

Sister Patricia entered the Benedictine Sisters of Erie in 1949 and took her first vows in 1951. She professed her final vows in August 1954. She received her bachelor's degree in history from Mercyhurst College and a master's in church administration and licentiate in canon law from the Catholic University of America, Washington, D.C.

In her early ministry, she taught at several diocesan schools but spent most of her years at St. Benedict Academy in Erie. Among the subjects she focused on were American history, political science, world cultures, social studies and contemporary issues.

"As a teacher, it was my goal to help the students to think independently and become critical thinkers," Sister Patricia says. "For me, teaching is about letting them come to a process of discernment and discrimination and find where the truth lay."



60 years

Teacher:

St. Benedict Academy, Erie
Sacred Heart, Sharon
St. Michael, Fryburg
Venango Catholic High School,
Oil City

Diocese of Erie:

Marriage Tribunal, judge
Defender of the Bond

Diocese of Richmond:

Marriage Tribunal, administrator

Diocese of Colorado Springs:

Marriage Tribunal, administrator
Chancellor

Office of Planning, director

Diocese of Dodge City:

Chancellor
Marriage Tribunal, administrator

Canon Law Society:

Active member
Board of governors, member
Benedictine Sisters of Erie:
Prioress' Council, member
General Chapter of the Federation
of St. Scholastica, delegate
Canonical consultant
Administrative assistant to
the prioress

She was elected to represent her religious community in the general chapter of St. Scholastica, a federation of monasteries of Benedictine women, where she was involved in the revision of a number of documents.

"That's when I decided to get the credentials," Sister Patricia says, referring to her canon law degree. "It gave me more confidence to be involved in that process and it opened up a whole new world for me in the future."

She interviewed for chancery positions in several states. The newly-created Diocese of Colorado Springs appealed to her. There she could use her experience in long-range planning, administrative skills and archival training.

"We were a small diocese," she recalls. "There were four people in the administration."

The Diocese of Colorado Springs celebrated its 25th anniversary last year.

In addition to serving Colorado Springs, Sister Patricia has also served in the administrations of the dioceses of Erie, Richmond, Va., and Dodge City, Kan.

Sister Patricia is currently an administrative assistant to the prioress of the Benedictine Sisters of Erie and serves as a consultant on canonical issues. She is also responsible for internal policy development in her religious community.

My Inspiration: "Every time we read Chapter 53 in the Rule of Benedict, I have a little prayer that I wrote and say myself about what Benedict was telling us. It's at the heart of our Benedictine charism: 'We pray that in a culture in which poverty is perceived as failure, self sufficiency as a virtue, where fear and violence create distrust of the stranger and the pilgrim, we pray for the grace to accept those who come into our lives in the person of the guest as we would Christ himself.'"

— Sister Patricia McGreevy, OSB

Sr. Maria O'Connor, R.S.M.

Sister Maria O'Connor, RSM, says the example of the Sisters of Mercy at Mercyhurst College in Erie, where she was a student, and her love for the church led her to choose religious life.

As a college junior, Sister Maria thought about a vocation to religious life. After graduation, she left uncertain and taught in Pittsburgh for one year before calling the Sisters of Mercy in Titusville.

"I said, 'I think I want to come,'" she recalls.

Over the years, she says she has come to understand Christ's words in John's Gospel, "It was not you who chose me, but I who chose you ..." (John 15:16)

As Sister Maria celebrates her 60th jubilee, she looks back on a career that includes education and parish ministry.

Sister Maria has a doctorate in theology from St. Mary's School of Theology, South Bend, Ind., and spent a term in the post-doctoral program at Yale Divinity School.

Her religious life has included teaching theology at Mercyhurst College for 18 years. Other teaching assignments have been at Catholic high schools throughout the Diocese of Erie. She has also served in parish life as a director of religious education and pastoral minister.



60 years

Mercyhurst College:

Theology professor
Guadalupe Ministry director

Teacher:

Mercyhurst Prep, Erie
St. Catherine of Siena, DuBois
St. Joseph Academy, Titusville
Director of religious education:
St. Teresa of Avila, Union City

Pastoral minister:

St. George, Erie
Campus minister:
Penn State Erie, The Behrend
College

Diocese of Erie:

Marriage Tribunal

Sisters of Mercy:

Leadership team
Vocation director

Administrative board:

Pennsylvania Catholic Conference
Volunteer:
Refugee ministry

"I really enjoyed teaching in college and pastoral ministry because both have the potential to stir up faith in others," Sister Maria says.

She also worked in the Marriage Tribunal for the diocese and was campus minister at Penn State Erie, The Behrend College.

Currently, she is director of the Guadalupe Ministry, which offers a unique opportunity to sisters from developing countries to receive an education at Mercyhurst College in Erie. The Sisters of Mercy provide these sisters with housing and community. Sisters from Kenya, Uganda and Liberia then take back home what they learned to their ministries.

Sister Maria is also a volunteer in refugee ministry in Erie.

In 2005, the Serra Club of Erie named her "Outstanding Religious of the Year."

Being a Sister of Mercy has been a rewarding experience for her.

"Being able to open the Gospel to others and have the companionship of others with the same intent has been a joy," she says.

My Inspiration: "I have gained strength and inspiration from Romans 8:28, 'We know that all things work for good for those who love God.'" — Sister Maria O'Connor, RSM

Sr. Maria Onuffer, S.S.J.

Sister Maria Onuffer, SSJ, thanks God each day for sharing with her the joy of the little ones and the wisdom of the elderly that she has graciously received through her 60 years of ministry in the Diocese of Erie.

A native of Lewis Run, Sister Maria received the highest commercial honors when she graduated from St. Bernard High School in Bradford. She earned her bachelor's degree in business education from Villa Maria College.

"The inspiration and dedication of the sisters who ministered at St. Bernard High School motivated me to listen to the call of the Spirit, even though there was much resistance at times," Sister Maria says.

In her parish catechism classes and in the classrooms at St. Bernard, Sister Maria says she witnessed the teaching ministry of the Sisters of St. Joseph at its best.

She entered the Sisters of St. Joseph in 1951 from Our Lady of Perpetual Help Parish in Lewis Run and professed her final vows in 1957.



Teacher:
Sacred Heart, Erie
Blessed Sacrament, Erie
Teacher aide:
Villa Maria Elementary, Erie
St. Mary's Home:
Secretary
Payroll clerk
Business manager
Assistant administrator
Administrator
Saint Vincent Health Center:
Secretarial/clerical
Behavioral services, clerical
Women's Diagnostic Center
Eucharistic minister:
St. Francis Xavier, McKean

Sister Maria's ministries in her religious congregation began with teaching in several diocesan schools and then moving into the study of services and health care for the geriatric population at Saint Mary's Home in Erie, where she served for 29 years. She was licensed as a nursing home administrator by the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania.

After retiring from Saint Mary's Home and completing a year of study in St. Louis, she joined the staff at Saint Vincent Health Center in the Outpatient Behavioral Services Department and presently ministers at Saint Vincent Women's Diagnostic Center.

"The faith of my parents laid the foundation for my gift of faith which over the years has been nurtured by the sisters in my congregation with whom I share ministry and life," Sister Maria says. "Prayer became a constant as I learned everything is possible with God."

Sister Maria is most grateful to God for letting her be a lifetime member of "Who the SSJs are—women of spirit, courage and vision."

My Inspiration: "Stimulated by the Holy Spirit of Love and receptive to His inspirations, the Sister of St. Joseph moves always toward profound love of God and love of neighbor without distinction...in sincere charity—the manner of St. Joseph whose name she bears..." — *from the Consensus Statement of the Sisters of St. Joseph*

Rev. Msgr. Henry J. Schauerman

Being a priest was the only job Msgr. Henry Schauerman ever wanted.

"There was never a time when I didn't want to be a priest," Msgr. Schauerman says. "The desire was there from my earliest age."

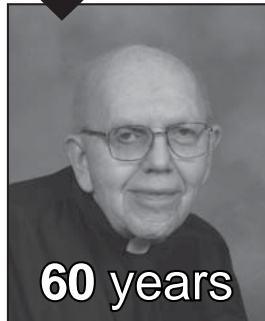
His parents helped and encouraged him to make his desire a reality.

"My mother made vestments for me to play priest and my father worked a second job at night to pay for the first two years of college," Msgr. Schauerman recalls.

He even had a childhood friend make him an altar out of cardboard, from which he could play priest.

Sixty years later, Msgr. Schauerman has found that ministering to those who are sick and shut in is the most rewarding aspect of his priestly calling. Administering the sacrament of anointing of the sick is the most important part of his work, he says.

Msgr. Schauerman, whose home parish is St. John the Baptist in Erie, graduated as valedictorian of his class at Cathedral Prep in 1944. He studied for two years at St. Charles College in Catonsville, Md., before moving on to St. Mary's Seminary and University in Baltimore for six years. He was ordained to the priesthood on May 3, 1951 by Archbishop John Mark Gannon.



Pastor:
St. Philip, Crossingville
St. Agatha, Meadville
Parochial vicar:
Blessed Sacrament, Erie
St. Joseph, Oil City
Parochial administrator:
St. Bernadette, Saegertown
St. Philip, Crossingville
Diocesan offices:
Meadville Deanery, dean
Clergy Personnel Board
Presbyteral Council
Marriage Tribunal
Rural Life Ministry, director
Diocesan consultant
Erie District Sodality Union,
assistant director

He served as pastor at St. Agatha Parish in Meadville for 28 years (1978-2001) before retiring from active ministry in 2001. He was also the longtime parochial administrator at St. Bernadette in Saegertown and pastor of St. Philip in Crossingville.

In 1984, Pope John Paul II named him a Chaplain of His Holiness with the title of monsignor. In 1994, the pope again recognized him as a Prelate of Honor. For his commitment to the spiritual development of Catholic Boy Scouts, the diocese and National Catholic Committee on Scouting awarded Msgr. Schauerman with the St. George Emblem.

While he is concerned about the lack of people in the pews on Sunday, Msgr. Schauerman thinks his time as a priest should help those figuring out their own vocations.

"I should hope my own life of 60 years as a priest to be helpful to a young man trying to discern a calling to the priesthood," he says.

My Inspiration: "It is encouraging to know that it is Jesus who gives us the call to serve him and spread his kingdom here on earth as it is in heaven (John 15:16)." — *Msgr. Henry Schauerman*

Rev. Eldon K. Somers, Ph.D.

Father Eldon Somers, Ph.D., a long-time educator, marks his 60th anniversary as a priest this year.

Father Somers spent 24 years at Clarion University as a faculty member. He also worked at Mercyhurst College in Erie from 1991-92. He taught at Gannon University in Erie in the 1950s and '60s.

Father Somers is a native of Kenmore, N.Y., a suburb of Buffalo, and is a convert to Catholicism.

He studied at Kenmore junior and senior high schools.

Before he studied for the priesthood, he taught for several years at schools in Western New York.

He was ordained a priest on May 3, 1951 at St. Peter Cathedral in Erie.

A graduate of Canisius College in Buffalo, Father Somers earned a bachelor's degree in social studies. He earned a master of education degree in educational administration from the University of Buffalo.

He earned a doctorate in education in 1963, becoming the first priest to receive a degree from the University of Buffalo after it became affiliated with the State University of New York. His doctoral thesis was on "Two Images of Jesuit Education."

After his ordination, Father Somers was on the faculty of Cathedral Preparatory School in Erie, with residence at St. Peter Cathedral's rectory from 1951-56.

In his diocesan assignments, he served as chaplain at the Erie County Tuberculosis Hospital in 1952 and for the Sisters of the Divine Spirit in 1957.

60 years



Parochial vicar:

St. Bernard, Bradford

Secondary education:

Cathedral Prep, Erie, faculty

Gannon University:

Faculty

Educational counselor

Dean of students

Director of personnel services

Clarion University:

Faculty

Newman Apostolate, chaplain

Mercyhurst College:

Faculty

Academic counselor

Consultant

Chaplain:

Erie County Tuberculosis Hospital

Sisters of the Divine Spirit, Erie

From 1956-58, he studied with the Order of Friars Minor (Franciscans) in Lafayette, N.J.

During the following two years, he served on the Gannon University faculty but briefly interrupted that to become the parochial vicar at St. Bernard Parish in Bradford.

While at Gannon from 1958-60 and 1962-67, Father Somers was a professor of social sciences and an educational counselor in the Department of Guidance and Placement. He also served as dean of students and was director of personnel services.

For the first eight months of 1962, he taught at Mercyhurst College and then was appointed to the faculty at Gannon where he stayed until leaving for Clarion in 1967.

In 1967, Father Somers spoke at a session of the National Catholic Guidance Conference in Dallas on "Student Freedom with Implications for Guidance."

In 1967-69, he was chaplain at Clarion University, serving the Newman Apostolate.

In July 1968, he attended Newman Chaplains'

Training School being held by Stanford University in Stanford, Calif., on a scholarship. The school was designed to prepare priests and sisters who worked on a secular college campus.

Father Somers became a faculty member at Clarion in 1969, retiring from there in 1991. He joined the faculty as an associate professor of sociology.

In 1991, he was appointed to the faculty of Mercyhurst College. He retired from there in 1992. He currently serves Mercyhurst College as an academic counselor and a consultant on special projects.

Sr. Barbara Zakutney, S.S.J.

Much of Sister Barbara Ann Zakutney's ministry has been dedicated to children at the former St. Joseph Home in Erie and through her musical gifts as a piano and organ teacher.

"My life as a Sister of St. Joseph has been blessed with many personal contacts throughout the years in keeping with our mission," Sister Barbara Ann says.

The seed of her vocation was watered by a dear friend of her mother who frequently visited the home.

"When I decided to enter the Sisters of St. Joseph, she was a great support," Sister Barbara Ann says.

She says she heard the call to religious life through prayer and the example of her mother.

A native of Christ the King Parish (formerly Sacred Heart) in Houtzdale, she entered the Sisters of St. Joseph in 1951 and made her final vows in 1957. She attended Houtzdale Woodward School and graduated from Villa Maria College with a bachelor's degree in elementary education. She also studied at the University of Dayton and Edinboro University.

Over the years, she says she has been inspired by many people, including Sister Michelle Pillar who helped her since her early days entering the community.

"Sister Michelle was full of love and life and I have tried to imitate her example," Sister Barbara Ann says.

In addition, she notes that Father Joseph Kacprowicz recognized her ability, encouraged and supported her and trusted in her judgment and administrative decisions.



60 years

Principal:

Spirit of Christ School

St. Ann, Erie

Teacher:

St. Ann, Erie

St. John the Baptist, Erie

St. Patrick, Erie

St. Andrew, Erie

St. Leo, Ridgway

Saint Vincent Health Center:

Registered nurse

Housemother:

St. Joseph Home for Children, Erie

Diocese of Erie:

Medical/moral advisory

committee

My Inspiration: "The Lord is my shepherd; there is nothing I lack."

— Psalm 23

Following her academic career, she became a registered nurse and worked at Saint Vincent Health Center in the surgical unit. She says it has been her privilege to serve as Father Kacprowicz's personal caregiver since his retirement.