
O B I T U A R Y

Sister Eva (Vita) Ernandis, OP

(S. Andrew Joseph, OP)

In the early afternoon of January 6, 2018, God, the Source of all light, called Sister Eva Ernandis to live in the Eternal Light of God's holy face. Sister was 85 years old and had devoted 64 years to her Dominican religious life.

On October 22, 1932, Joseph and Josephine Ernandis welcomed Eva (baptized Vita) into their family. She and her brothers Joseph, Vito, John and Andrew, and her sister, Lena, were raised in Most Holy Trinity Parish, Montrose Avenue, Brooklyn.

After graduating from Washington Irving H.S., Eva worked for five years, first as a seamstress and then as a secretary at Sterling Pharmaceutical Company.

Already known to the Sisters at Most Holy Trinity, Eva entered the Congregation in Amityville on September 10, 1955 and received the Dominican habit and the name, S. Andrew Joseph, on August 6, 1956. After her profession of vows on August 8, 1957, Sister Eva began her ministry of elementary education.

During her earliest years she ministered in the field of education at the parish school of Fourteen Holy Martyrs, Brooklyn, NY. Future assignments brought her to the parish schools of St. Francis of Assisi, Long Island City, St. Ignatius, Long Beach, NY, St. Peter, Monticello, NY, and Holy Spirit, New Hyde Park. In each of these assignments her students experienced a gentle, intelligent, deeply prayerful teacher. After sixteen years in elementary education, Eva followed God's call to serve in Religious Education. After graduating from Molloy College (Summa cum laude), Eva became a Coordinator of Religious Education at St. Anthony's parish in Oceanside, NY.

These were the earliest years of full time religious formation programs. Eva wrote and implemented a First Grade Program, trained catechists, and prepared parents to be fully involved. Sisters who knew Eva would say that St. Anthony's was where her creativity flourished and Eva agreed with this assessment.

She was immersed in liturgical renewal and brought her skills to enhancing the worship environment. Because St. Anthony's Church could not accommodate the large congregations during Holy Week services and at Christmas, Eva's early work as a seamstress came into play. Her enthusiasm combined with that of the young Jesuits turned the bare auditorium into a cathedral-like atmosphere. Parishioners were in awe at the transformation. Eva sewed yards and yards of material which formed a canopy over the altar and flowing drapes across the ceiling. Remarkably, these coverings went from white to red and back to white between Holy Thursday and the Easter Vigil. It was an extraordinary work of art.



"Very truly I tell you, whoever hears my word and believes him who sent me has eternal life and will not be judged but has crossed over from death to life."

- John 5:24

Sister Eva subsequently ministered in Pastoral Services at Mercy Center, Patchogue, St. Mary's Hospital, Brooklyn, and Siena Spirituality Center, Watermill, NY. Eva also donated her service to the Motherhouse as a receptionist for a year before returning to Pastoral service at St. Joseph parish, Garden City and St. Paul the Apostle parish, Brookville, NY. In addition, Sister Eva was a volunteer at Bethany House, Roosevelt, NY.

Eva's creativity was also expressed in poetry, sketching and beautifully written notes of encouragement, celebration and condolence which recipients cherished.

As a contemplative and deeply prayerful Dominican, Eva spent a year at Our Lady of Homestead House of Prayer in Rhode Island and then went on to train as a spiritual director at Creighton University. Upon graduation, she became a member of Amityville's Samaria House of Prayer, first in Hicksville and then in Farmingdale. She designed and led days of prayer, prepared prayer services and continued the ministry of spiritual direction.

Eva treasured quiet time. She took delight in bird-watching, growing vegetables and other gardening. She could bring a waning plant back to full bloom. A talented cook and baker Eva enjoyed preparing a spread for others to enjoy.

Eva was a loving and generous friend and had deep and devoted relationships with those closest to her. She will be deeply missed by her family, the entire Amityville Congregation, especially by her close friend, Sister Barbara Gerardi, the Sisters who have lived with her throughout her life in community and by her present community of Sisters in Malverne, NY.

All who knew her delight that God took her home on January 6, 2018, the Feast of the Epiphany, celebrating those wise dreamers who followed a star. Eva's loving God came to surround her with light and to fulfill her trusting heart's desire.

Eva is survived by her sister Lena and brother-in-law John, her nephews Anthony (Ellen), Joseph Bellemante; Chris, Andrew and Joseph (Carrie) and nieces Josephine (John) and Kathleen Ernandis.

All services will be in St. Albert Chapel at Queen of the Rosary Motherhouse, Amityville, NY. The wake will take place on Thursday, January 11, 2018 with a prayer service at 3 p.m. and visitation following and continuing until 7 p.m. Following Morning Prayer at 10:10 a.m. on Friday, January 12, 2018 the Mass of Christian Burial will be celebrated at 10:30 a.m. Burial in the Sisters' cemetery will follow immediately after Mass.

