
O B I T U A R Y

Sister Rita P. Lombardi, OP

(S. Michael Anthony)

Early on Sunday morning, October 22, 2023, our beloved Sister Rita Lombardi was welcomed into the warm embrace of the God she had loved and served for 72 years as a Dominican Sister of Amityville. She was 90 years old.

On March 12, 1933, in Brooklyn, New York (NY), Anthony and Michaelina Purificato Lombardi welcomed Rita into their family. She, along with her brothers, Joseph and Anthony, and her sister, Corinne, were raised in Glendale, N.Y. where they attended St. Pancras Elementary School and where Rita first encountered the Sisters of St. Dominic. After graduation from Bishop McDonnell Memorial High School, Rita entered the Novitiate on September 8, 1951. On August 4, 1952, she was clothed in the Dominican habit and received her religious name, Sister Michael Anthony. She pronounced her first vows on August 7, 1953 and her final vows on the same date in 1956.

Rita received a Bachelor of Science from St. John's University, Jamaica, NY; a Master of Arts from St. Michael College, Colchester Vermont (VT); and a second Master of Arts from Creighton University, Omaha, Nebraska (NE).

Education was Rita's ministry, both traditional classroom teaching and religious



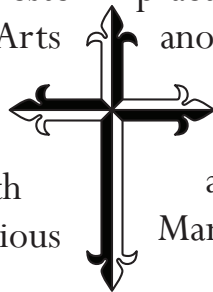
“It is only with the heart that one can see rightly; what is essential is invisible to the eye”

- Antoine de Saint-Exupery

education and administration. From 1954 to 1971, Rita taught elementary grades at St. Thomas, Woodhaven; Good Shepherd, Brooklyn; St. Boniface, Elmont; St. Peter, Monticello; and Corpus Christi, Woodside. She also taught in the Brooklyn Diocesan program for intellectually gifted students and was an adjunct instructor of theology at St. John's University, Staten Island campus. She was an excellent and very patient teacher.

In 1971, she embraced the field of religious education, serving as director at Corpus Christi, St. Columba, and St. Catherine of Alexandria. From 1997 to 2007, Rita provided secretarial services for the Holy Childhood Association, Diocese of Rockville Centre, and from 1987 to 2009, she offered spiritual direction to several people.

Rita was a woman with many gifts and interests. She was a seamstress, an artist, a crocheter, a wonderful Italian cook, and a lover of opera and ballet. She was a member of the liturgical dance group that enhanced services here at the Motherhouse. She practiced Reiki and found in clown ministry another avenue for preaching the Word to children and adults. She loved people—her students, community members, and family. Her longtime friend, Sister Margaret Sammon, mentioned that Rita was



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never speedy; everything she undertook was accomplished slowly and methodically.

Throughout her religious life, Rita was known for her gentle and kind presence—in school, in ministry, in community. For the last eight years, her ministry of intercessory prayer touched many. Her soul was nurtured by a lifelong commitment to contemplative prayer. Truly, our Sister Rita embodied the summons of our Chapter Statement: called to be a sign of joy and hope, she surrendered herself to the God of gracious abundance, unending mercy, and love. We now surrender Rita to our God.

Rita was predeceased by her parents, her brother Joseph, and her sister Corinne. She is

survived by her brother, Anthony, her nieces and nephews and their families, by her dear friend, Sister Margaret Sammon, and by her loving Dominican community.

All services for our dear Sister Rita will be held in St. Albert Chapel at Queen of the Rosary Motherhouse. Visitation will take place on Thursday, October 26 at 9:15 AM. A Prayer Service will begin at 10:15 AM. The Mass of Christian Burial will follow immediately at 10:45 AM. Then, interment in St. Dominic Cemetery located on the Motherhouse grounds will take place.

*~May our beloved Sister Rita be held in the
gentle arms of God~*
