

Excerpts from the Commentary Given at the Wake of Sr. Christina Rupp, OSM

In the gospel reading we just heard (Matt. 6), Jesus tells his disciples not to be showoffs. Don't blow a trumpet so everyone can see you giving alms, he says. Don't advertise your praying or your fasting. Keep your good works between yourself and God.

If ever there was anyone who lived this gospel, it was Sr. Christina. All her life, she did good things quietly, simply, faithfully, without any fanfare. These last few days, as I have listened to those of you who knew her well share your memories of Sr. Christina, I have heard words and phrases like: pleasant, patient, quiet, very accepting of whatever life brought her, a perfectionist, refined and proper, loved working with her hands, good at crafts, practical, an excellent seamstress, very generous. Sr. Mary Verona claims that she would still be sewing her profession scapular if Christina had not offered to do it for her.



When Sr. Christina entered the community, she didn't intend to be a teacher. However, the community needed teachers so she started working on her degree in history and her teaching certification, and into the classroom she went. I was not surprised when one of her colleagues told me she was an excellent, no-nonsense teacher with a neat classroom and beautiful bulletin boards. She loved her students, and was especially fond of those in the intermediate grades. Her teaching career took her to St. Benedict's and Holy Name in Omaha, St. John Berchmans in Detroit, and then back to Omaha where she spent seventeen years at St. Pius X, first as a teacher and then as librarian. In 1993, she retired at the age of seventy-seven, and came to the motherhouse where she did community service as long as she was able. In the middle of her teaching years, she went to Lucea and Falmouth in Jamaica (1973-76) where she did parish work and part-time teaching in a government school. She was definitely a "trooper" with a spirit of adventure.

Sr. Christina loved her family, and what a family she had! She would talk about how happy she was growing up in Cherokee on the farm, how much she enjoyed her siblings, and how grateful she was for the blessing of such a good family. She loved getting Christmas cards with family photos. She kept track of her many nieces and nephews and their extended families, and was proud of every one of them. Her happiest moments were visits to family, especially at the time of special celebrations when she could see so many relatives at once.

Sr. Christina was definitely a woman who aged gracefully. She was pleasant, never demanding, and always grateful for the smallest kindness shown her. She was so accepting of her infirmities, maintaining a positive attitude even during some very serious illnesses. Over and over she would say, "I've had a good life." Though her memory failed her in her final years, her pleasant disposition still came through. The nursing staff so often told me she was a joy to care for. Her gracious presence will be missed.

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