



Born to New Life

Sister Anita Canale, MPF



Sister Anita Canale, 83, entered eternal life peacefully on Monday, March 21, 2016, at Saint Joseph Hall.

The Most Rev. Arthur Serratelli celebrated Sister Anita's Mass of Christian Burial the Wednesday of Holy Week. Homilist, Msgr. Peter Zaccardo, fittingly addressed each of the scripture readings, and skillfully spun Sister Anita's personality and achievements within the context of each reading. His kind words confirmed he was a great champion of Sister Anita.

Sister Anita entered the Religious Teachers Filippini on October 23, 1955, and received the religious habit on August 26, 1956. On August 30, 1959, she made her final religious profession. This August will complete a sixty year milestone.

Sister Anita was awarded a Bachelor of Science degree in Elementary Education from Seton Hall University. She taught in the Archdioceses of Newark, New Jersey; Hartford, Connecticut; Philadelphia, Pennsylvania; and in the Dioceses of Trenton and Camden, New Jersey; and Albany, New York. A spirited and conscientious teacher, Sister Anita was loved and respected by her students. However, she will be especially remembered at St. Bartholomew School, Scotch Plains, New Jersey, where she taught eighth grade for fifteen years and excelled as an English teacher. In her later years in ministry, Sister Anita was pastoral minister at Holy Family Parish, Nutley, New Jersey. Among her other duties, she happily accepted the role of moderator for the Saint Lucy Filippini and Rosary Sodality.

Other positions entrusted to Sister Anita included principal at Saint Francis School in Hackensack, New Jersey, and Superior in Scotch Plains, Nutley, and Merchantville, New Jersey. Sister Anita was provincial secretary for the late Sister Clare Testa and secretary at the General Chapter, Rome, Italy. In 2006, Sister Anita became assistant to the archivist at Villa Walsh and assisted in the archives until her health failed. She entered Saint Joseph Hall only a short time prior to her passing.

In delivering her eulogy, Sister Ascenza capitalized on how Sister Anita loved life and loved everything about living this life. These are a few examples Sister shared in her tribute:

"Undoubtedly, it started with family, hours and miles away from here in Watertown, New York, where Sister Anita was born and raised in a family very tightly knit and deeply rooted in love... No doubt, this is where Sr. Anita first experienced love, acquired a taste for good food, learned to be generous, and to share God's blessings..."

"She loved her life as a Filippini Sister and has remained faithful to the promises of her Oblation. Today we celebrate her perseverance, her dedication to the Filippini charism and mission, especially as a catholic educator. Her years as a teacher were rich, rewarding and also recognized..."

"Sister Anita loved people. During her years as pastoral associate, she ministered to the homebound. During this time she made many friends among the elderly and sick. She often related how they waited for her visits. As much as Sister loved the people she served, she reveled in the love they returned. She loved being loved..."

Sister Ascenza explained *"Sister Anita's life was interspersed with ill health, but after each illness she always picked up where she left off and moved forward. Her prayer life was her strength."*

These sentiments concluded the tribute: *"... Sister Anita appears before God with hands that are full. Yes, she loved this life. On Monday, however, Sr. Anita left this earthly life behind for a new life, a new home. Sr. Anita, we will miss you, but you have left this earth for something much greater that lies before you."*

"Because we live in faith, we know and believe that everything you experienced in this life pales in comparison to the joy and glory you now enjoy in your new life, a life filled with the magnificence and glory of a loving God and Father. Rest in peace, dear Sister!"