



Birth
July 28, 1918

Baptism
August 18, 1918

Profession
August 3, 1939

Death
July 14, 2014

Burial
Sancta Maria
in Ripa Cemetery
St. Louis, Missouri

*Precious and blessed is
the death of the faithful
before God... for
they die in union with
their dear Jesus, in the
grace of God, in peace.*

Blessed Theresa of Jesus Gerhardinger
Foundress of the School Sisters of Notre Dame
Letter 11, September 10, 1831

In Loving Memory

Sister Rita [M. Paulinus] Knittel, SSND

On July 28, 1918, the second of five children was born to Paula [Fischer] and George Knittel in St. Louis, Missouri. She was baptized at St. Edward Church on August 18, 1918 and named Rita. Due to living a distance from the nearest Catholic school, she attended Samuel Cupples Public School for her first three grades. She completed her grade school education at Holy Ghost Grade School where she was taught by the School Sisters of Notre Dame. During these years, Rita attended the SSND reception and profession ceremonies with her teachers.

She won a four-year scholarship to St. Alphonsus [Rock] High School. Although drawn to the contemplative life, she resolved to follow Christ who spent his life teaching. Rita entered the candidature on September 2, 1936. She was received into the novitiate on August 2, 1938 and given the name Mary Paulinus, in honor of her mother. Profession of first vows was on August 3, 1939 and final vows on August 3, 1945.

She earned a Bachelor of Arts degree in English from Le Clerc College, Belleville, Illinois in 1949 and a Master of Arts degree in education from San Diego State University in 1968.

For 62 years, Sister Rita ministered in elementary and secondary education. She taught primary children at Blessed Sacrament, Belleville, Illinois; St. Gregory, Tyler, Texas and St. Mary, Cape Girardeau, Missouri. She taught secondary students at Helias High School, Jefferson City, Missouri and St. Paul High School, Santa Fe Springs, California. She was principal and teacher at Our Lady of Guadalupe, La Lima Nueva, Honduras and St. Jude Academy, San Diego, California.

In the late 1960s, Sister Rita underwent foot surgery. She suffered heart failure during the surgery. In an effort to regain her strength without the tensions and stress of community life, she petitioned for exclaustation. During these two years, she lived with a family in San Diego. She obtained employment as the coordinator of WIN (Work Incentive Program), a federally funded program for disadvantaged adults affiliated with the Riverside Public School system.

Returning to SSND, Sister Rita spent the next 32 years in teaching. She taught junior high students at Immaculate Heart, St. Louis, Missouri; secondary students at Notre Dame High School, St. Louis and tutored students for 11 years at the Notre Dame Tutorial/Learning Center at the motherhouse.

In November 2002, she was diagnosed with a blockage in the heart and three stents were inserted. Sister Rita retired to Anna House in 2006. She celebrated her 75th jubilee of religious profession in May 2014 at Anna House. On July 12, 2014, she experienced an episode which left her unconscious. As a sister kept watch with her, she peacefully died at Anna House around 10:50 p.m. on July 14, 2014, two weeks before her 96th birthday.

continued

In Loving Memory



Sister Rita Kuttel



To make a memorial gift,
please visit our secure
online donation page [here](#)>

For more information,
contact info@ssndcp.org.

www.ssndcentralpacific.org



**School Sisters
of Notre Dame**
Central Pacific Province

TRANSFORMING THE WORLD
THROUGH EDUCATION

A wake/vigil was held at Anna House and Theresa Center on July 17, 2014. The Mass of Christian Burial was celebrated the following morning with Rev. Paul Rothschild as presider. Burial was in the Ripa cemetery. Family members, friends and SSNDs joined together in celebrating the gift of her life. Sister was preceded in death by her parents, her sister Eleanora and her three brothers: Paul, Robert and John.

Sister Rita was a very intelligent person and gifted teacher. Her bilingual ability was a great asset during her years in California and Honduras. In the Notre Dame Tutorial/Learning Center, she was often given the new and challenging courses for the high school students. She would research the subject to find out all she could about a topic and would hold the interest of the student.

A reserved and very private person, she sought retirement and quiet but could carry on a very animated conversation. She had a great love for family members.

Kind and gentle, Sister Rita had a generous heart for the poor and disadvantaged. At the motherhouse, she would often bake cakes and cookies to give to the poor.

May she now rejoice in reuniting with family members who have gone before her as she enters into eternal peace and rests in the God whom she served so faithfully!

By Sister Carol Marie Wildt, SSND