

Sister Rita Pearce

1931-2020



Sister Rita Pearce, age 88, died August 4 at Bell Tower Residence Assisted Living in Merrill, WI. Rita Jean was born on November 18, 1931, in Wausau, WI, daughter of John and Sophie (Sherfinski) Pearce. She entered Holy Cross Convent in Merrill, WI, on July 16, 1950, and professed her vows on August 20, 1952. She was in her 68th year of ministry at the time of her death.

Sister Rita, also known as Sister Jacqueline in her early days, received her education at Our Lady of the Holy Cross High School in Merrill, WI; The College of St. Scholastica, Duluth, MN; Edgecliff College, Cincinnati, OH; Alverno College, Milwaukee, WI.

She ministered in religious education in Mercer, WI, and Luling, LA; elementary education in Deer Park, OH, Rhineland and Antigo, WI. She also ministered as a supervisor at St. Jude Baby

Village, New Orleans, LA. Sister was assistant to the coordinator of the senior sisters at Holy Cross Convent, Merrill, WI.

In an earlier interview, Sister said, “I loved working at St. Jude Baby Village. I loved to carry the babies around. Sometimes they spent more time with us than they did with their own mothers. I took good care of them.” She loved volunteering at the Lincoln County Humane Society, holding the animals waiting to be adopted.

Her family of Holy Cross Sisters and associates, nieces, cousins and friends survive Sister Rita. Preceding her in death were her parents and two brothers.

Visitation and graveside services were held August 7 in Merrill, WI. Burial was at St. Francis Cemetery, Merrill, WI. Memorials can be designated to the Huss Fund and sent to Holy Cross Sisters, 1400 O’Day Street, Merrill, WI, 54452.