



Rose Alma Schuler SL
September 25, 1918 — April 2, 2010

"I knew from life-long association with religious and from Sister Leoann [her sister] that sisters were happy, but I don't think I expected to experience the richness, the wonderful relationships in community—not to mention the spiritual fulfillment and joy —I have found as a Sister of Loretto."

The twins, Mary Rose (the older) and Catherine Lucille were the first-born of Leo Joseph Schuler and Elizabeth Lillian Olges on September 25, 1918 in Jefferson County, Kentucky.

Catherine visited Bethlehem Academy where her father's cousin, Sister Bernard Marie Recktenwald was teaching. She was the first Sister of Loretto Catherine ever met, and from that first meeting and visit at Bethlehem, Catherine expressed her wish to go there. "We spent four wonderful years at Bethlehem and graduated in 1936."

Mary Rose entered the novitiate of the Sisters of Loretto in February of 1937. Catherine wrote: "I didn't give much thought to a religious vocation except vaguely as "someday" I would be a "sister". In the fall of 1942, Catherine applied for admittance, was accepted for the February 15, 1943 class, and took the name Rose Alma to honor her two sisters.

Teaching at Mt. Carmel in/St. Louis, Missouri was Rose Alma's first assignment. She noted in her autobiography, "I spent eleven happy years teaching there, and had the good fortune to live with many fine women. In 1953 I earned my AB degree in Social Studies with minors in Education and English from Webster College (University). In 1956 I was appointed superior-principal of St. Michael School at 11th and Benton streets in St. Louis. I continued teaching the first grade as I had always done at Mount Carmel, and grew to love the little deprived children of that decaying inner city area."

In 1958 Rose Alma was elected to serve as Secretary General and Fourth General Councilor of the Congregation. Mary Luke Tobin had been elected Superior General and for the next twelve years Rose Alma had the privilege of being Luke's secretary. She would in 1964 be re-elected as Second Assistant General and Secretary General.

Rose Alma wrote: "This event was the second great turning point in my life. As secretary to Sister Mary Luke I had the opportunity to experience from the beginning the changes and evolution of religious life, the Church and the world. These were enriching years and I learned much through working with Mary Luke who generously shared the insights she received from contact with other religious leaders and through wide reading. Living at the Motherhouse was another rewarding privilege and one which I have always felt brought many graces."

In 1974 she became administrator of the Motherhouse Infirmary, a position she held until 1987. Rose Alma wrote: "I enjoyed the 14 years I spent working in the infirmary and found them very rewarding and an occasion for spiritual development that would not have been possible in any other setting. One insight I was particularly aware of was the effect of Vatican II theology on the patients' concept of God and an awakening realization of God's mercy and compassion...there was a sense of peace, an acceptance of and even a welcome for death."

On January 19, 1995 Rose Alma wrote: "During this year as in all those following my resignation as administrator of the Motherhouse Infirmary, I was able to contribute to the community in the capacity of part-time secretary to the Local Coordinator, drive infirmary residents for medical appointments, and for airport trips...One of my goals was to be available whenever and for whatever service I might be able to render either to individuals or at the community level."

And be available you were, Rose Alma! Thank you for your many, many years of generous service to Loretto.

Adapted from an obit by Kate Misbauer SL