

Sister Rachel known as spiritual director in Fort Smith

written by Special to Arkansas Catholic |

Sister Dolores Rachel Dietz, OSB, who was dedicated to teaching, counseling and spiritual direction for 66 years at St. Scholastica Monastery, died June 7. She was 85.

She was born Dolores Pauline Sept. 26, 1935, in Happy, Texas, to Gustave and Helena Jansen Dietz.

She entered St. Scholastica Monastery in Fort Smith in 1952 and took the name Sister Rachel when she was officially received into the convent on June 24, 1953. She made her monastic profession June 24, 1955, and final vows in 1958.

According to a 2015 *Arkansas Catholic* article celebrating her 60th jubilee, Sister Rachel was active in school and parish ministry in Arkansas and Missouri. In Arkansas, she taught at St. Anthony School in Ratcliff, St. John School in Brinkley and worked in religious education in McGehee and Fort Smith.

She received a double bachelor's degree in sociology and theology from Mundelein College in Chicago and a master's in the psychology of religion from the University of O'Hara in Ontario, Canada. Sister Rachel also earned a master's degree in social work from St. Louis University. She worked for Catholic Family Services in St. Louis and opened a counseling practice at St. Pius X Parish in Tulsa, Okla., the article stated.

Sister Rachel was subprioress at St. Scholastica from 2001 to 2011. In 2008, she was an Ignatian spiritual director for the formation program through the sisters in Piedmont, Okla. Sister Rachel then initiated the program in Fort Smith. Most recently served as the director of St. Scholastica's spiritual director formation program.

According to her obituary from St. Scholastica, "Sister enjoyed reading, cooking, hiking, movies, singing, playing dominoes and cards and attending plays and musicals. She was gifted in growing orchids. Sister Rachel was dedicated to those in AA programs and sought to serve the underprivileged. She was close to her family and loved to share stories of her many experiences."

There are no immediate survivors. The monastery said due to the COVID-19 pandemic, a Mass for Christian Burial will be held at a later date. Memorials can be made to St. Scholastica Monastery Continuing Care Fund, 1315 S. Albert Pike Ave., Fort Smith, AR 72903.