

Sr. Leona Card, osf

Leona Gertrude Card was born November 14, 1923 to Leon and Elizabeth Card in Bridgeport, Connecticut. She was the third oldest among her 10 other siblings. The Cards grew up in Wilton, CT in the family home built by Leon Card himself. Craftsmanship and carpentry proved to be a family trait!

Leona Card (named for her father) graduated from Laurelton, a Catholic girl's high school in Milford, CT. Hearing the call to religious life Leona travelled to Danville, VA where she entered the Society of Christ the King. There she took the name Sr. Rosalie and began a life that revolved around evangelization, apostolic works and works in support of civil rights. Danville, VA became a hotbed of civil rights demonstrations beginning in 1963 and the first public support of civil rights in that area was attended by Sr. Rosalie and her superior, Mother Teresa.

In 1976 the small Society of Christ the King was dissolved. Eventually Sr. Leona came west and procured a teaching position in Louisville, CO at St. Louis School. It was while in Louisville that she became acquainted with the Sisters of St. Francis of Penance and Christian Charity in Denver (also known as the Marycrest Franciscans). In 1980 she entered as a candidate and on September 8, 1983 she professed her vows with the Marycrest Franciscans as Sister Leona Card, OSF.

For the next couple of years she continued to teach, but then was transferred to Manderson, South Dakota where she labored with Sr. Geraldine Clifford, OSF, to establish a foster home for Lakota children who were in need of this support. St. Francis Home was blessed by the manual labor of many of the Card family, and Sr. Leona herself, as a traditional log cabin was added onto in order to accommodate children and care staff alike. Sr. Leona was passionate about this work and spoke lovingly about the Lakota children she had come to know and love in her 6 years there.

Sr. Leona was a "Card" in many ways! Writer, poet, a lover of limericks and jokes, she could entertain any crowd. Her creativity didn't end with the use of words, though, as her painting and art work served to give both her and many others great delight.

Sr. Leona was an educator and she loved to impart her love of God to those she taught. She especially loved to teach religion: her call to evangelization realized early in her religious life was always present, whether the person in front of her was 9 or 90, in a formal classroom or in the classroom of life! As a graduate of Carlow College and Duquesne University (MS Ed.) in Pittsburgh, PA her education gave her the skills to minister to students in numerous settings in Denver, CO; Alliance, NE; Newport, NH, and Cheyenne, WY.

As Sr. Leona began to feel her age she retired and lived at the Gardens of St. Elizabeth's, Francis Heights, and Dayspring Villa, all in Denver. When she needed yet more care she moved to Mount St. Francis Nursing Center in Colorado Springs, CO where she lived the last one and a half years of her life.

Sr. Leona entered eternal life on April 2, 2015 after several weeks of declining health. Her last visitors, in the hour before her death, were her brother Santa Card and sister –in–law Ann. Sr. Leona's Funeral Mass was held at St. Dominic's Catholic Church in Denver, Colorado on Friday, April 10. She and Sr. Macrina Scott were celebrated together at this Mass of the Resurrection as they both died on the same day. Sr. Leona was buried in Mount Olivet Cemetery, in Denver, Colorado.