

Sister Rita McCarthy

***“I fell in love with Joseph and have been very happy.”***

This is how Sister Rita McCarthy sums up her life as a Sister of St. Joseph of Boston in her 75th Jubilee Year! After being born in Charlestown, one of nine children, growing up in Medford, and attending Medford Public Schools, Rita McCarthy began her working life at the O’Brien Russell Insurance Company in Boston. As time passed, she felt a strong call to join a religious community. Her pastor recommended the Sisters of St. Joseph, which she eventually joined. After her novitiate, her first assignment was ten wonderful years at St. Joseph in Lynn, followed by four years at St. James in Haverhill. She next helped to open Aquinas College in Newton and went on to teach at Aquinas College in Milton.



After Sister Rita was educated as a social worker and working with social service agencies, she felt called to set up a Volunteer Center in Quincy. From this center, many sisters made contacts and went out to volunteer wherever they were most needed throughout the City of Boston and surrounding cities and towns. A judge in Quincy, familiar with her work, asked her to open a group home for girls in the city of Quincy. For 19 years, Sister Rita, along with Sister Marie Connolly, ran the Group Home for Girls, a community-based treatment center, established in 1974, and sponsored by Quincy Family Youth Services. Inspired by working with these teenage girls, Sister Rita remembers, “We spent 19 years working and living with teenage girls. They knew we were there for them every day and every night of every year!” The home established a loving and accepting atmosphere where the girls were trusted to believe in themselves and to believe in their own integrity and goodness.

***“The person in front of me inspires me the most”***

This is such a beautiful quote expressing what it means to Sister Rita to be a Sister of St. Joseph. To be living her life in a way that exemplifies the sister’s mission of connecting neighbor with neighbor and neighbor with God and in being fully present with each and every person with whom she interacted, who needed her help, or was in her care!

Sister Rita was then asked by the Archdiocese of Boston to work in an office that processed complaints of sexual abuse and harassment. She arranged for help, legal aid, and counseling for those who reported being abused. During these years, she was deeply affected by their pain and struggles and, even more, inspired by their courage and strength.

Thank you Sister Rita for all your years of devotion and service to the community!