

## **Reflection on the Life of Sister M. Adele Rogers**

### **October 15, 1929—August 7, 2020**



Rita Ann Cecilia Rogers was born on October 15, 1929. She entered the Sisters of Charity in 1947 when she was only 17 years old. Her father, Patrick, was born in Italy and was one of fifteen children. Her mother, Christine, was born in the United States and was one of nine children. Adele grew up in Bloomfield, went to Immaculate Conception for grade school and Sacred Heart for high school. She was proud of her Italian heritage. Her father worked for Duquesne Brewery. She noted that her mother was a pianist and also played the accordion. She had a brother, Charles, known in Bloomfield as “Bear” and a sister,

Patricia. Her sister, Patricia, and her niece, Rita, are with us today.

I first met Sister M. Adele when I was assigned as a postulant to teach the third grade at Saint Irenaeus School in Oakmont. I had always wanted to be a teacher, probably because my mother was one; but teaching my paper dolls was a very far cry from having 45 lively third graders in front of me! Sister Adele came to my rescue and helped me to navigate the wonders of lesson plans, reading groups, seatwork, workbooks, recess, milk money, and all the other pieces of classroom management. She was my teacher guide and mentor. One of my third graders asked me one day whether she was “my mother!” We both got a good laugh out of that and often jokingly called each other “Mother” and “Daughter.”

Sister Adele left a well-documented history of her life as a Sister of Charity, much of it written in her beautiful Palmer Method penmanship. She was a teacher, a librarian, an assistant principal, and a principal. It seems to me that she was never idle! She loved to read and to travel. She is the only person I know who could successfully get herself from one end of Pittsburgh and its

surrounding areas to the other on any and all public transportation! I think she loved to be on the move. She taught, or was a librarian, in about 18 different schools. In her later years, she was often a substitute teacher in a number of schools. One principal said of her, “We could always count on sister Adele’s smile and calm presence.” She traveled when she could both within the United States and abroad, joining with tour groups, an undaunted soul!

Among her memories Sister Adele listed neighborhood landmarks in Bloomfield and common occurrences such as the deliveries by the ice man before electric refrigeration and the fruits and vegetables delivered by the hucksters. Her first job was at the 5 and 10-cent store. Later on she babysat from 9:00 to 5:00 for \$1 a day. During World War II, her brother enlisted in the Navy and the family went to see him off. She remembered food rationing, recycling tin cans, and victory gardens as part of the war efforts. Movies were 12 cents for children and 27 cents for adults; and Westerns were the popular movie fare.

She relates that she was influenced by her parents’ work ethic and inspired by the sisters who taught her. She said, “I would wish that my legacy would be that I persevered in my vocation and was faithful to my consecrated life as a religious.” As we heard the many memories last night at the wake, we know that her legacy is even much more. When was the last time you rode on a bus with someone and they wrote and told you what a great experience it was? Her bus ministry was a special gift to many.

Sister Adele noted that her favorite prayer was “the Lord is my shepherd. There is nothing I shall want.” That seems typical of the way she lived her life. We are glad that we rode part of life’s journey with her. Thank you, Adele! May you dwell in peace with the eternal shepherd and never have to look up a bus schedule again!

*Funeral Liturgy Reflection*

*Sister Vivien Linkhauer*

*August 11, 2020*