

Sr. Rosalia Bauer celebrates 60 years

She embraces life as nurse and pro-life advocate

By Pat Casucci

Catholic Herald Correspondent

BELOIT — Over a span of 60 years as a Franciscan Sister of Perpetual Adoration, Sr. Rosalia Bauer has enthusiastically embraced life in a happy, grateful manner.

“To be is a blessing; just to be is holy. Whatever I do, I do wholeheartedly. I try to live my life fully, in the present moment,” she said.

For the past 17 years, Sister Rosalia has lived at St. Jude Parish

in Beloit and continues in her present mission as a dedicated pro-life advocate. She’s also a volunteer in the parish and in the Beloit community.

“My ministry goal is that people have a greater respect for every human being from womb to tomb,” stated Sister Bauer.

Registered nurse

Agile and active, with her friendly smile, Sister Rosalia reveals a smooth, easy manner accented by the patience, consideration, love, and care gleaned from her extensive experience in nursing. A registered nurse, she also has a master’s degree in community health care.

An overview of her life adventures the past 60 years includes the fact that she’s moved 35 times

and has lived in nine states and in Thailand. Sister Rosalia has always worked as a registered nurse, a public health nurse, or a family nurse practitioner.

Family life

She’s also provided care and help for her own family members and proudly stated that her family “is always an important part of my life.” She confidently said, “No matter where I was, I met and worked with wonderful people. We really do have lots in common with one another, with the same basic needs of wanting to love and to be loved.”

Perhaps it was the child’s nurse kit she received from Santa Claus when she was a third grader that solidified Sister Rosalia’s desire to be a nurse and care for people. She grew up on her family’s dairy farm in Pepin County, the ninth child in a family of 11 children.

Her two sisters were the oldest children in the family, so Bauer happily states she grew up with her brothers, climbing trees and the windmill; she rode horses. Jovially referring to that nurse kit, she said, “I had plenty of practice taking pretend temperatures on my brothers, then giving them a prescription of ‘red hot’s’ candy.”

She had typical teenage years,

full of adventures, boyfriends, and attending Gene Autrey and Roy Rogers movies with her brothers.

Vocation as a Sister

Sister Rosalia believes the idea of a vocation to be a Sister was always there, “but I didn’t pay attention to it.” She was “challenged” by a verse on the family’s kitchen calendar stating that the “harvest is great, but the laborers are few.” “That always haunted me,” she said.

When she entered St. Rose Convent in LaCrosse on September 1, 1947, she candidly stated, “I went to the convent thinking I would not stay, but the more I got to know God, the more I loved him.” She made her first vows on August 12, 1950.

Referring to her vocation, her eyes twinkling as she smiled, Sister Rosalia remarked, “I’ve always lived in a community since childhood, growing up together in my large family.” She also credits 12 years of Catholic education in Lima Township and a teaching Sister there whom she admires “as my forever, favorite teacher.”

She calls the nurse kit received in third grade “God’s twinkle for

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