

## SISTER RITA ROSE BILY, CDP



Sister Rita Rose Bily, CDP, entered eternal life on November 11, 2015 at the age of 91. She was the second oldest of six born to Frank and Rosie (Okruhlik) Bily. Sister Rita Rose was born February 7, 1924 in Praha, Texas. She answered God's call to become a Sister of Divine Providence on June 4, 1946 and professed first vows on June 22, 1949. Sister Rita Rose began her ministerial life at Our Lady of the Lake Convent in 1949.

Sister Rita Rose was born and raised on the family farm in Praha, Texas. As the oldest *living* child, Sister Rita Rose was her father's right hand person and tended the family farm alongside him. Her sense of obligation and the needs of her family kept her from entering the convent at an earlier age. She gladly harrowed, planted and cultivated their land but quickly explained "never plowed." After her profession of vows, she was surprised to be asked to join the dietary service of the convent. She learned everything as she went along because she did not know how to cook. Her perseverance and her strong call to service were key to her 38 years of successful meal preparation for the Sisters, male students of Moye Military School in Castroville, Texas, and boarding students in Palestine, Texas.

After this ministry, she served as the Sacred Heart Chapel Reservations Manager for 19 years. She assisted 700+ weddings and became well versed in the logistics and needs for the Sacrament of Marriage. She filled in for priests who were unable to attend wedding rehearsals and graciously assisted many brides who expressed their appreciation for her calmness, organization and professionalism. Despite her busy weekends, she found time on Sundays to babysit the infants who resided and were cared for at "Providence Home" a congregational ministry for HIV positive babies and children.

Sister Rita Rose was the person many sought to fill a void because she was a quick learner who willingly and successfully accepted challenges. Her reliability, promptness and assistance were qualities many sought and admired.

She is survived by her sister, Monica Melnar, brother, Msgr. John Bily, some nieces, nephews and cousins, including Msgr. Lambert Bily, and all her other Sisters of Divine Providence. She was preceded in death by her parents, Frank and Rosie Okruhlik Bily, infant brother Frank, siblings Msgr. Edward Bily, and Lucy Lednicky, brothers-in-law Jim Lednicky and Joe Melnar and CDP Aunts Sister Monica Okruhlik, Sister Cyprian Okruhlik, Sister Eustacia Okruhlik.

The Rosary is Sunday, November 15 at 4:30 p.m. and the Wake at 6:30 p.m. A Mass of Resurrection will be Monday, November 16 at 10:30 a.m. All services will be in Annunciation Chapel at Our Lady of the Lake Convent.