

Name: Sister Mary Ann Nugent (Sister Rita Clare)  
Date of Birth: May 8, 1938  
Place of Birth: Cambridge, Ohio  
Parents: L. Paul (Lawrence Paul) and Christine Suzanne (Hulka) Nugent  
Religious Profession: August 15, 1959  
Date of Death: January 31, 2020  
Age: 82  
Years Professed: 61



#### Reflection by Sister Natalie Binversie, Community Director

Mary Ann Nugent was born in Cambridge, Ohio on May 8, 1938 to L. Paul (Lawrence Paul) and Christine Suzanne (Hulka) Nugent. She was baptized at St. Benedict Church in Cambridge on May 22, 1938 by Father Clement Crock. Mary Ann made her First Holy Communion there on October 28, 1945, and received the Sacrament of Confirmation on May 11, 1947.

Mary Ann grew up in a loving, supportive family. Mary Ann was the oldest of ten children. She has four brothers and five sisters. They were members of St. Benedict Parish where Mary Ann and her siblings were taught, by the example of their parents, to have dependence on God in their daily life. It was important that they cared for one another as family. Mary Ann shared a story that demonstrated this in a profound way. Mary Ann asked her Dad why God allowed her sister to be paralyzed with cerebral palsy. Her Dad responded, "God let this happen, not because He wanted to punish Barbara, but because He wanted all of us to help her."

Mary Ann first became acquainted with the Franciscan Sisters of Christian Charity through a portrait of her aunt, Sister Rosamond, which hung in her grandparents' living room. Mary Ann was drawn to how happy Sister Rosamond looked in the picture. She had the opportunity to travel to Wisconsin when she was six years old, to spend a few days with Sister Rosamond and her local community of Sisters at Messmer High School in Milwaukee. Her vocation was further nurtured by the example of the Sisters who taught and served at St. Benedict Grade School and St. Benedict Central High School in Cambridge.

After graduating June 10, 1956 from St. Benedict Central High School in Cambridge, Ohio, Mary Ann worked as a clerk-typist at Herrick L. Johnston, Inc. in Columbus, Ohio. The call to become a Sister remained with her. In a letter dated July 6, 1957 Mary Ann wrote the following letter to Mother Agna:

*Dear Reverend Mother,*

*My name is Mary Ann Nugent and I am writing you to ask if I may apply for admission into your Religious Order. I am 19 years old and have been out of high school for a little over a year now. Last June 1956, I graduated from Saint Benedict's High School in Cambridge, Ohio. A week after graduation I went to Columbus, Ohio to work in the office of a small research and development company. I worked for this company until October. At that time my Mother was expecting a baby, that was due in early November. I*

*felt she needed my help, so I packed my bags and headed for Cambridge. There I was fortunate enough to find a job in the office of the RCA plant. I stayed in Cambridge until February when I received a letter from the firm I had worked for in Columbus, asking me to come back and work for them. After much consideration, I did go back and that is where I am at the present time.*

*As for my family, I am the oldest of nine children. (The tenth child was born after Mary Ann left home.) My parents are two of the most wonderful people in the world! My Aunt, Sister Rosamond, is a member of your Community.*

*The reason for wanting to become a member of your Religious family is hard for me to explain. Naturally, I don't think I'm worthy enough. I do, however, want to serve God the best way I can and the way He wants me to serve Him. For a long time, I have thought about becoming a Religious and I prayed that God would show me the way. Recently, since the first part of May, I have thought more seriously about this matter. The more I think about it, the more I want to come. So, really, my reason is merely that I want to serve God the best way I know how and I think that being a Religious is the best way for me to do this.*

*When I can come, creates a little problem. You see, right now, I am having some work done on my teeth and my dentist won't be finished until around the first week of September. I couldn't come until after that time. However, if you would prefer that I come the first week in September, I am quite sure he could arrange to have the work finished in time, since he is a friend of the family. If you will accept me, I will be most happy, as I am quite anxious to start making my life more worthwhile.*

*Respectfully yours,  
Mary Ann Nugent*

The following reference, dated July 14, 1957, was sent to Mother Agna:

*Reverend and Dear Mother,*

*Since Father Trettel, the Pastor of St. Benedict's Parish, has left on a six-week vacation, I am writing this at the request of Miss Mary Ann Nugent. Mary Ann wishes to enter your Community. As far as I know, she is a young lady of excellent character and comes from a good Catholic home. Her family is considered among the best of St. Benedict's Parish. She has two Uncles who are Priests and an Aunt who is a member of your Community. So, I feel if it is God's Will, she will make a good Religious.*

*If there is anything I can do for you or for Mary Ann, please let me know, as I am anxious to help in any way that I can. I am*

*Sincerely in Christ,  
Rev. Father Richard L. Battocletti  
Assistant Pastor*

Mary Ann was accepted and left Ohio, by train, to enter Holy Family Convent on August 25, 1957. It was difficult for Mary Ann to leave home, however, she was supported in her decision to become a Sister, by her parents, siblings and other family members. On the day of her Reception, June 13, 1958, Mary Ann received the name, Sister Rita Clare. At the time of Vatican Council II, she returned to her baptismal name and was known as Sister Mary Ann.

Sister Mary Ann attended Holy Family College to earn a Bachelor of Arts Degree on July 28, 1966 with a Major in English and a Minor in History. She continued her education at Ohio State University in

Columbus, OH where she earned a Master's Degree in 1973 with a Major Area of English Education. Sister Mary Ann completed the School Administration Program at Xavier University in Cincinnati, OH, August 1979. On August 1, 2000, a Doctorate of Philosophy was conferred upon Sister Mary Ann at Marquette University, Milwaukee, WI an Advanced Degree in Educational Leadership in the Major Area of Curriculum and Instruction and Educational Policies and Leadership.

Sister Mary Ann was always appreciative of the educational experiences which enriched her life personally and professionally, serving as teacher and administrator. After Sister Mary Ann retired as Assistant Professor at Silver Lake College of the Holy Family she was missioned to be a volunteer at Genesis Hospital in Zanesville, OH. In her words, "In this position my eyes have been opened to the wonderful work the Franciscan Sisters of Christian Charity have done and are continuing to do, extending the healing ministry of Jesus to those who are poor and suffering, in southeastern Ohio. At this time in my life, I am delighted to be a part of this beautiful ministry in some small way."

In the most recent review of Sister Mary Ann, the Volunteer Manager at Genesis Hospital wrote, "Sister Mary Ann is responsible for serving with our patients in our surgery lounge department with the patient experience team. She also serves at our information desk and OB desk. Sister is a valuable volunteer to have as a part of our Volunteer Team, since she serves in multiple positions. Sister Mary Ann is such a joy to be around. She is versatile and is willing to serve wherever she is needed. She has a pleasant personality, is uplifting to work with, is peaceful and has a welcoming smile. Everyone is always very happy to see her!" Sister Mary Ann did not reserve her joyful hospitality only to her ministry. She loved to cook and bake. The Chocolate Chip Cookie can was always full!

In her Jubilee reflection Sister Mary Ann wrote, "One of the most rewarding experiences I have had in my Religious Life was the privilege to join a pilgrimage to Rome and Assisi in the fall of 2011. Through this experience, I found great peace and joy. I definitely grew in my appreciation of the call to be a follower of the saintly Francis of Assisi." Sister Mary Ann was very appreciative of the many blessings experienced in Community. The witness of her Sisters, living exemplary lives as Consecrated Religious, were role models for her. She never forgot the roots of her up-bringing and all she learned from her parents, siblings, extended family and friends.

At the end of her Jubilee reflection Sister Mary Ann wrote, "For the remainder of the days that God gives me as a Franciscan Sister of Christian Charity, I hope to become more aware of His daily presence in my life, delight in His many gifts and serve Him in any way I am able." We believe that Sister Mary Ann surrendered her life to God and lived out that desire until He called her home on the last day of 2020.

Sister Mary Ann, thank you for being our Sister in Community. Thank you for the witness of your quiet, joyful, peaceful presence. Please continue to intercede for the Franciscan Sisters of Christian Charity from your eternal resting place. May God grant you eternal life. AMEN.