



## Sister Rita Hoffner

August 17, 2019

Sister Mary Rita Clare Hoffner, age 91 a Sister of Mercy, died on August 17, 2019 after a brief illness at St. Mary Home, 2021 Albany Ave. West Hartford. Born of the late William and Olivine (Gardner) Hoffner in Manchester, CT she was also raised there. After graduating high school, Rita became a Sister of Mercy on December 28, 1946 and pronounced her vows on June 28, 1949 taking the religious name, Sister Mary Rita Clare. She began teaching primary grades in numerous parish schools within the Hartford Archdiocese, earning a B.S degree in education studying on a part time basis. She continued to teach moving to upper grades through 1975. At that time, Sister determined to explore a new ministry to bring her in closer contact with lay adults. She became a cosmetologist working at J.C. Penney for a four year period. In 1977, having completed a Master's degree in Pastoral Ministry, Sister left hairdressing and returned to parish work in administration as school principal at St. Joseph School in Enfield. She held that position until she was invited to direct a religious education program at Sacred Heart parish in the Norwich diocese. She soon loved the ministry, the students, their family contacts and developed strong pastoral ties. In that setting, she was enabled to reach out to those in need. She modeled a spirituality that was expressed in a quiet, kind and gentle manner. It became her signature. Her personal quest now complete, she stayed in the Norwich area through retirement. She moved to West Hartford and St. Mary Home within two weeks of her death, giving new meaning to the term- lifelong minister. Sister Rita Clare was predeceased by her parents and two aunts who were Sisters of Mercy. She is survived by her grateful community of the Sisters of Mercy, with whom she spent 73 fruitful years. A Mass of Resurrection will be celebrated on Friday Aug. 23 at 1:00 p.m in St Mary Home Chapel preceded by calling hours beginning at 11:00. Burial will follow the Mass and take place in St. Mary Cemetery. Those wishing to make a donation in Sister's memory are asked to consider Sisters of Mercy, 25 Prescott St. West Hartford, CT 06110. Taylor & Modeen Funeral Home, West Hartford has care of the arrangements. For online condolences please visit [www.taylorandmodeen.com](http://www.taylorandmodeen.com)

# Cemetery

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**Saint Mary Cemetery**  
2021 Albany Avenue  
West Hartford, CT, 06117

# Events

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**AUG 23 Visitation 11:00AM - 01:00PM**  

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St. Mary Home  
2021 Albany Ave., West Hartford, CT, US, 06117

**AUG 23 Mass Of Resurrection 01:00PM**  

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St. Mary Home  
2021 Albany Ave., West Hartford, CT, US, 06117

**AUG 23 Burial**  

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Saint Mary Cemetery  
2021 Albany Avenue, West Hartford, CT, US, 06117

# Comments

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“ Sister Rita Clare was my parents’ tenant in Norwich for almost 30 years. She was a great friend and neighbor to my parents, always baking chocolate chip cookies and bringing them to my parents. After my mother passed in 2009, she made a special effort to visit with my father more often, and she often brought him something to eat while they visited. When we had snow storms, my husband plowed my parents’ driveway, as well as Sister’s driveway, but oftentimes, when we arrived to plow, Sister was already out there shoveling. I asked her why she just didn’t wait for us to plow. She replied that if my father could be out there shoveling, and he was ten years older than she was, that she could shovel too. She was simply amazing and such a wonderful family friend. When my father was ailing, and we had to sell his home in 2015, which meant that Sister Rita Clare had to relocate, she donated a set of small nesting tables to me; I still use them on a daily basis and think of her each time I use them. I also saw Sister frequently at Backus Hospital, where we both volunteered. My sisters and I made it a point to take her to lunch every summer for her birthday, but she hated us making a fuss over her. Sadly, we were not able to do so this year, since she was ill. Sister Rita Clare has a special place in my heart, and I have many fond memories of her. She will be missed, but she is now at peace, eating chocolate chip cookies in Heaven with my Mother and Father.

Nancy Belliveau Barry

**Nancy Belliveau Barry** - August 22, 2019 at 09:34 AM



“ Sister Rita volunteered with me at Backus on Tuesday mornings. She was such a lovely woman and always just had the best attitude no matter how she was feeling. She will be missed by all that knew her. There has to be a special place in heaven for her.

**Alice Hinchcliffe** - August 22, 2019 at 05:40 PM



“ My mother and Sr. Rita Clare were lifelong friends. I was given the middle name of Rita, in honor of Sr. Rita Clare. She always held a special place in my heart. Such a wonderful person. My deepest sympathies to her nieces and extended family.

- Maureen Rita Whaples Walsh

**Maureen Walsh** - September 05, 2019 at 08:00 PM