

CHAPTER – 2G

BERNICE-CHARLOTTE-ROSE KAVANAUGH-SISTERS



Top Left: Was taken in Detroit sometime in the 50's, Sister Rosemond/Aunt Rose, Grandma Kavanaugh, (John's widow) Sr. Charlotte, Sr. Bernice. Below: Sr. Charlotte, Rose, Sr. Bernice. Back: Louis Sr., Harry, Vincent. Picture may have been taken at Ferdinand sometime in the 80's.



Left: Sr. Charlotte, Aunt Rose and Sr. Bernice, taken just before Aunt Rose entered the Convent in 1938. Above: Aunt Rose, Sr. Bernice and Sr. Charlotte. Date of the picture was sometime around 2000.



Left: Pictured here are three Kavanaugh daughters of John & Mary Lucy Kavanaugh. The picture was taken on the day Sister Charlotte's Day of Investing in 1934. Shown here are (L-R) Sister Charlotte, Rose and Sister Bernice. Rose did not enter the Convent till 1939.



Above: Sister Charlotte standing in front of her classroom at St. Mary's school in Washington Indiana on her first teaching assignment.



Left: Pictured here are the Three Nuns, Sister Charlotte, Sister Bernice and Sister Rosemond. Not sure when this picture was taken but probably in the 1940's.

Sisterly love over 100 years

SPECIAL TO THE T-H

FERDINAND, Ind. — Eighty-two years ago, a young Irish farm girl from Cannelburg came to Ferdinand on the Ferdy Flyer train to enter the Benedictine monastery located atop a hill overlooking the small German town. On Saturday, that same girl, now Sister Bernice Kavanaugh, will celebrate her 100th birthday at Monastery Immaculate Conception in Ferdinand.

Born on Dec. 4, 1904, in Cannelburg to John T. and Mary (O'Connor) Kavanaugh, Marie, as she was named, was fourth in a family of 11 children.

Influenced by her six brothers, Marie became a "tomboy." When she entered the monastery, according to Sister Bernice, the sister in charge of the new members "wanted to take the cornfield out of me. She hoped to make a lady out of me."

One hundred years provides lots of memories and stories. Going way back, Sister Bernice still remembers when the school "bus" was pulled by a team of horses. "It didn't come by our house so we walked to school through fields and pastures and along a railroad track into town."

She remembers as a seventh or eighth grader that her mother made her wear big galoshes in the winter. "I didn't want to wear them to school so I took them off and hid them in the bushes along a fence. Some sheep in the



Photo By Kelly Overton

Sister Bernice Kavanaugh (left) reads a letter to her "little" sister Sister Mary Charlotte Kavanaugh. Sister Bernice celebrates her 100th birthday today. She is still active at the Benedictine Monastery in Ferdinand where she helps care for Sister Mary Charlotte, 88, who suffered a stroke last year.

field carried them off, and I had to tell my mother what happened."

Sister Bernice's entrance into the monastery on Oct. 30, 1922, was also an eventful day. The monastery church — which is currently being restored — was under construction. Work on the interior of the church, delayed for six years because of the

war, was again under way. She remembers that she was receiving the official cap and cape worn by new members from the prioress, Mother Seraphine Kordes, when they heard a commotion in the hall. A worker had fallen from the scaffolding inside the church, and someone was calling for a priest to anoint him. Sister Bernice's uncle,

a priest who had accompanied her to Ferdinand, went with the sisters to tend to the man, who later recovered from his injuries.

During her early years in the monastery, Sister Bernice remembers that some of the prayers and hymns were still being said in German, but she never learned the German language. Her Irish eyes

smile when she recalls the sister choir director telling her not to pray a certain prayer aloud with the choir. "You pray quietly because your German sounds like cursing," the director said.

On Aug. 10, 1924, Sister Bernice and her classmates were the first sisters to pro-

See BIRTHDAY, Page 6A

Times-Herald, Washington, Indiana

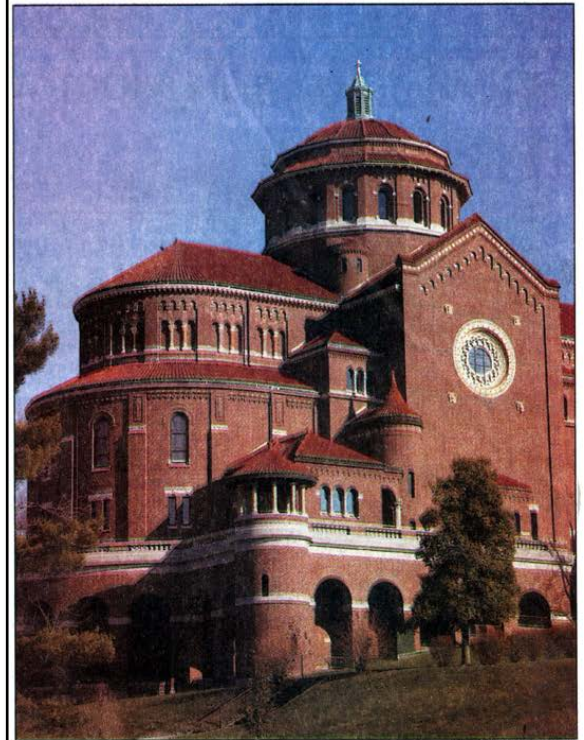


Photo By Kelly Overton

Sister Bernice Kavanaugh was in the first class of nuns to take vows in the new Monastery of Immaculate Conception. She has returned to spend her days at the place where her vocation began more than 80 years ago.

BIRTHDAY: Sister celebrates 100th

Continued from Page 1A

fess their vows in the new church.

Sister Bernice was a teacher and principal with a career that spanned many years and geographic areas before returning to the place of its beginnings in Ferdinand. She served in schools at Huntington, Indianapolis, Vincennes, Mt. Vernon, Clarksville, Evansville, Dale, and Haubstadt, Ind.; Turtle Mountain Indian Reservation in Belcourt, N. D.; Tucson, Ariz.; and Fort Rucker, Ala. Between two of those teaching assignments, she also served as administrator of St. Paul Hermitage, a nursing home facility in Beech Grove, Ind.

Beginning in 1976, she worked at a U.S. Army base in Fort Rucker, keeping house for her younger sister, Sister

Mary Charlotte Kavanaugh, and assisting her in teaching religion and tutoring in English.

After 19 years at Fort Rucker, and at 91 years of age, she "retired" from active ministry and returned to Ferdinand, where she was "recycled and reassigned," as she explains, helping with laundry, cleaning, sewing, and correspondence for the sisters in the monastery infirmary. Now, at age 100, she helps "to a smaller degree," she says.

Looking back on her years of service, Sister Bernice thinks the most difficult work was being a teacher and principal at the same time. She took on many difficult assignments but still says, "Life has been good to me."

Sister Bernice rises at 5 a.m. each day, spends time in

prayer at various periods through the day, including morning, mid-day, and evening prayer with the community, takes a nap some days, listens to tapes on spiritual topics (she has difficulty reading because of poor eyesight), exercises to keep limber, and helps care for her sister, Sister Mary Charlotte, who resides in the infirmary.

"I sort of look after her and do her writing of mail and such things," Sister Mary Charlotte suffered a stroke last year and is now in the infirmary at the Convent.

What is this centenarian's secret for living so long? "Working and enjoying what I do. I exercise. I guess I just keep living. I don't feel any older. I feel that it's somebody else that is going to celebrate her 100th birthday, not me."

A special Mass to celebrate her 100th birthday will take place at St. Peter's Catholic Church in Montgomery at 9:30 a.m. on Sunday, with family and friends helping Sister Bernice mark this special occasion.

Above: This Article appeared in the Washington Times Herald when Sister Bernice turned 100 years old on Dec. 4 of 2004. A special Mass was held at St. Peter's Church in Montgomery and a breakfast held for her Family and friends.



Picture left: Sr. Charlotte and Sr. Bernice taken at Sr. Bernice 100th Birthday party at St. Peter's in Montgomery in Dec. of 2004

Ft. Branch
Francisco
Hazleton
Haubstadt
Oakland City
Owensville
Patoka
Pike County

Princeton

March 16, 1973 15¢

Daily Clarion

Oldest continuous business institution in Gibson County — 127th year 2 weeks by carrier \$1.10



Sister Bernice Kavanaugh, a teacher at Sts. Peter and Paul Catholic School, Haubstadt is a fine example of Irish stock. Both sets of her grandparents were from Ireland. St. Patrick's day, the wearing of the "green" is depicted in some of her wall decorations in her classroom. The Irish holiday is Saturday, March 17.

Sister Bernice Kavanaugh

Born: Dec 4, 1904

Died: Feb. 22, 2007



FERDINAND — Sister Bernice Kavanaugh, 102, of Monastery Immaculate Conception in Ferdinand, died at 6:53 p.m. Thursday at the monastery's Hildegard Health Center.

Sister Bernice was born the fourth of 11 children of John and Mary (O'Connor) Kavanaugh on Dec. 4, 1904, in Cannelburg.

She entered the Sisters of St. Benedict in 1922 and made her first profession of vows in 1924 and her final profession in 1927. She celebrated the 80th anniversary of her monastic profession in 2004.

Sister Bernice was a school teacher for 49 years and also served as principal for 26 of those years. Beginning in 1924, she taught at Huntingburg, Indianapolis, Holy Spirit in Evansville, Dale, and Tucson, Ariz. She served as principal and taught at Vincennes, Mount Vernon, Clarksville, Holy Redeemer in Evansville, Haubstadt, and Belcourt, N.D. She was administrator of St. Paul Hermitage, Beech Grove, Ind. She taught religious education to military families at a U.S. Army base in Fort Rucker, Ala., for 19 years. From 1995 to 2005, she provided support services at the monastery. For the past year, she served in the ministry of prayer.

She is survived by two sisters, Sister Mary Charlotte Kavanaugh of Monastery Immaculate Conception in Ferdinand and Rosemary Kavanaugh of Indianapolis; nieces and nephews; and members of her religious community. She was preceded in death by her parents; her brothers Timothy, Vincent, Albert, Harry, Bernard, Louis Sr., and Francis; and her sister Katherine Kavanaugh.

A Mass of Christian burial will be celebrated at 3:45 p.m. today at Monastery Immaculate Conception in Ferdinand. Burial will be in the monastery cemetery. Visitation was at Monastery Immaculate Conception in Ferdinand on Sunday, with a wake service at 7 p.m. in the monastery church, and today beginning at 1:30 p.m.

Contributions in memory of Sister Bernice may be made to the Sisters of St. Benedict, 802 E. 10th Street, Ferdinand, IN 47532.

Arrangements are being made through Becher Funeral Home, Ferdinand. (Feb. 22, 2007)

Sister Mary Charlotte Kavanaugh



Born: Mar 16, 1916

Died: Aug. 29, 2014

Sister Mary Charlotte Kavanaugh, 98, of the Sisters of St. Benedict of Ferdinand, died at 11:15 a.m. Friday in the monastery's Hildegard Health Center.. A native of Cannelburg, Sister Mary Charlotte was born March 16, 1916, the tenth of eleven children born to John and Mary (O'Connor) Kavanaugh.

She entered the Sisters of St. Benedict of Ferdinand in 1934 and made her profession of monastic vows in 1936.. She is survived by one sister, Rose Kavanaugh of Beech Grove; nieces and nephews; and members of her religious community. She was preceded in death by her parents; two sisters, Catherine and Sister Bernice; and seven brothers, Frank, Timothy, Vincent, Harry, Bernard, Louis and Albert.

In 1937, Sister Mary Charlotte began her 63-year career in areas of education, including religious education and administration. She taught and supervised student teachers at St. Benedict College in Ferdinand and also taught at St. Ferdinand Grade School, St. Benedict in Evansville, and St. Mary's in Washington. She served as a consultant and supervisor for schools in the Evansville Diocese and was Editor of Mine, a national religious education magazine. From 1972 to 1995, she served as director and teacher of religious education at the U.S. Army base in Fort Rucker, Alabama. She also was director of religious education at parishes in Siberia, Ferdinand, and Schnellville. She served in the ministry of prayer since 2003.

Visitation will be at the monastery on Monday from 2 p.m. to 6:45 p.m. and on Tuesday from 2 p.m. to 4:15 p.m. A wake service will be Monday at 7 p.m. The funeral Mass will be on Tuesday at 4:30 p.m. in the monastery church, followed by burial in the monastery cemetery.. Becher Funeral Home in Ferdinand is in charge of the arrangements. Memorial contributions may be made to the Sisters of St. Benedict of Ferdinand.

Tombstones for Sister Bernice Kavanaugh & Sister Charlotte Kavanaugh



*Left is the tombstone for **Sister Bernice Kavanaugh** who was a Nun at the Convent in Ferdinand, Indiana. Sister Bernice was born on Dec. 4, 1904 and died on Feb. 22, 2007. She made her final vows on Aug. 11, 1924. Sister Bernice is buried in the Cemetery at the Convent at the bottom of the hill. Sister Bernice's mother was Mary Lucy "O'Connor" Kavanaugh, and Mary Lucy's parents were Michael O'Connor Jr. and "Bridget Hart". One of Sister Bernice's Brothers was Louis Kavanaugh Sr.*

*Right is the tombstone for **Sister Charlotte Kavanaugh** who was a Nun at the Convent in Ferdinand, Indiana. Sister Charlotte was born on Mar. 16, 1916 and died on Aug. 29, 2014. She made her final vows on June 8, 1936. Sister Charlotte is buried in the Cemetery at the Convent at the bottom of the hill. Sister Charlotte's mother was Mary Lucy "O'Connor" Kavanaugh, and Mary Lucy's parents were Michael O'Connor Jr. and "Bridget Hart". One of Sister Bernice's Brothers was Louis Kavanaugh Sr.*



Obituary of Rose Mary Kavanaugh



Rose Mary Kavanaugh died September 5 at St. Paul Hermitage, Beech Grove, Ind. She was 96. Rose was born November 16, 1919, at home on the family farm near Cannelburg, Ind. She was the eleventh and youngest child of John and Mary E. “Mayme” (O’Connor) Kavanaugh. According to family lore, she weighed only 1.5 lbs. at birth. She was called “Pee Wee” by her siblings, who would put her in a shoebox, tie a string to it, and pull her around the house.

She was graduated from St. Theresa High School in Detroit, Mich., in 1938. In 1939, Rose entered the Benedictine Monastery Immaculate Conception in Ferdinand, Ind., and received the religious name Sister Rosemond. In 1950, Rose was graduated from St. Benedict College, in Ferdinand, with a Bachelor of Science degree in education; in 1968, she received a Master of Science degree in education, with a concentration in guidance and counseling, from St. Francis College in Fort Wayne, Ind. In 1955, Sister Rosemond became one of the 113 foundresses of Our Lady of Grace Monastery in Beech Grove, Ind.

While a Sister, Rose taught school for many years in southern Indiana and in Indianapolis at St. Pius X School, where she was principal, and at St. Barnabas School, also in Indianapolis. In 1972, she requested and received release from her religious vows. After leaving the monastery, she was employed as a social worker at Mary Rigg Neighborhood Center in West Indianapolis. Rose once said that her work at the neighborhood center was one of the most satisfying times of her life and that it gave her a great appreciation for the blessings she had received in her own life.

In 1980, she returned to teaching and spent the next decade at St. Jude School in Indianapolis. She retired in 1990 at the age of 70. In retirement, Rose served for several years as a substitute teacher and gave private tutoring lessons. Prior to, and following, retirement, she was a very active volunteer at her parish of St. Barnabas, where she was involved in the Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults and served as a catechist in the parish’s grade school religious education program.

Preceding her in death were her parents and her 10 siblings: Timothy, Vincent, Albert, Marie (Benedictine Sister Bernice, of Monastery Immaculate Conception), Harry, Bernard, Louis, Frank, Catherine, and Josephine (Benedictine Sister Mary Charlotte, also of Monastery Immaculate Conception). Sister Bernice lived to be 102 years old, Harry was 99 years old at the time of his death in 2006, and Sister Mary Charlotte was 98 years old when she died in 2014. Rose is survived by numerous nieces and nephews and hundreds of former pupils.

Friends may call at Daniel F. O’Riley Funeral Home, 6107 S. East St. (US 31 South) Indianapolis, on Thursday, September 8, from 4–7 p.m. A Mass of Christian Burial will be celebrated at 11 a.m., on Friday, September 9, at St. Barnabas Church, 8300 Rahke Road, Indianapolis, with calling beginning at 10 a.m. Burial will be at Calvary Cemetery, Indianapolis. Memorial gifts may be made to Catholic Charities Indianapolis, 1400 North Meridian Street, Indianapolis, Ind., 46202; the Sisters of St. Benedict of Beech Grove, Ind., Our Lady of Grace Monastery, 1402 Southern Avenue, Beech Grove, Ind., 46107; or the Sisters of St. Benedict of Ferdinand, Ind., Monastery Immaculate Conception, 802 East 10th Street, Ferdinand, Ind. 47532.



Irish Blessing

May the road rise up to meet you.
 May the wind always be at your back.
 May the sun shine warm upon your face,
 and rains fall soft upon your fields.
 And until we meet again,
 May God hold you in the palm of His hand.

O Loving God

O Loving God, we send our sister home to you, home to a place of everlasting love, to join there with the angel choirs and blessed saints and to behold your glorious holy face.

Receive her soul and let eternal light shine, eternal light forever on her soul, so she may be forever in your dwelling place, and be at rest in peace until we meet again.

O Loving God, have mercy and forgiveness upon your servant's now departed soul, and may your grace and love enfold her evermore, so she may dwell in paradise at last.

LONDONDERRY AIR
 words by Paulette McCoy
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The Kavanaugh family and the St. Barnabas parish community invite you to a luncheon served in McNally Hall following the Rite of Committal at Calvary Cemetery.

Mass of Christian Burial

Rose Mary Kavanaugh

November 16, 1919 – September 5, 2016



St. Barnabas Catholic Church
 Indianapolis, Indiana
 September 9, 2016



"Rosie taught hundreds of students from school books, but she taught thousands by example. We are all greater for having known her."

-Bill Bruns III

Celebrants Rev. James Farrell, Rev. Msgr. Anthony Volz
 Deacon Patrick Bower

Introductory Rites

Processional Hymn "How Great Thou Art" G-496

Sprinkling with Holy Water
 Placing of the Pall Family and Bill & Sallie Bruns

Liturgy of the Word

First Reading: Wisdom 3:1-6, 9 Kay Andres, niece
 The souls of the just are in the hand of God, and no torment shall touch them. They seemed, in the view of the foolish, to be dead; and their passing away was thought an affliction and their going forth from us, utter destruction. But they are in peace. For if before us, indeed, they be punished, yet is their hope full of immortality; Chastised a little, they shall be greatly blessed, because God tried them and found them worthy of himself. As gold in the furnace, he proved them, and as sacrificial offerings he took them to himself. Those who trust in him shall understand truth, and the faithful shall abide with him in love: Because grace and mercy are with his holy ones, and his care is with his elect.
 The Word of the Lord. ALL: *Thanks be to God*

Responsorial Psalm "Shepherd Me, O God" G-23

Second Reading: Romans 6: 3-4, 8-9 Charlotte Lewinski, niece
 Brothers and sisters: Are you unaware that we who were baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into his death? We were indeed buried with him through baptism into death, so that, just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, we too might live in newness of life. If, then, we have died with Christ, we believe that we shall also live with him. We know that Christ, raised from the dead, dies no more; death no longer has power over him.
 The Word of the Lord. ALL: *Thanks be to God*

Gospel: Matthew 25: 31-46 Deacon Pat
 Jesus said to his disciples: "When the Son of Man comes in his glory, and all the angels with him, he will sit upon his glorious throne, and all the nations will be assembled before him. And he will separate them one from another, as a shepherd separates the sheep from the goats. He will place the sheep on his right and the goats on his left. Then the king will say to those on his right, 'Come, you who are blessed by my Father. Inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world. For I was hungry and you gave me food,

I was thirsty and you gave me drink, a stranger and you welcomed me, naked and you clothed me, ill and you cared for me, in prison and you visited me.' Then the righteous will answer him and say, 'Lord, when did we see you hungry and feed you, or thirsty and give you drink? When did we see you a stranger and welcome you, or naked and clothe you? When did we see you ill or in prison, and visit you?' And the king will say to them in reply, 'Amen, I say to you, whatever you did for one of these least brothers of mine, you did for me.' Then he will say to those on his left, 'Depart from me, you accursed, into the eternal fire prepared for the Devil and his angels. For I was hungry and you gave me no food, I was thirsty and you gave me no drink, a stranger and you gave me no welcome, naked and you gave me no clothing, ill and in prison, and you did not care for me.' Then they will answer and say, 'Lord, when did we see you hungry or thirsty or a stranger or naked or ill or in prison, and not minister to your needs?' He will answer them, 'Amen, I say to you, what you did not do for one of these least ones, you did not do for me' and these will go off to eternal punishment, but the righteous to eternal life."
 The Gospel of the Lord. ALL: *Praise to you Lord, Jesus Christ*

Homily Fr. Jim

Prayers of the Faithful Leslie Kavanaugh, great niece

Liturgy of the Eucharist

Preparation of the Gifts Hymn
 "Make Me a Channel of Your Peace" G-721

Presentation of the Gifts Great Nieces

Communion Rite

Communion Hymn "You Are Mine" G-627

Meditation "Ave Maria" CANTOR

Final Commendation

Incensing and Song of Farewell "O Loving God" BACK PAGE
 Final Blessing "The Irish Blessing" BACK PAGE

Recessional Hymn "We Shall Rise Again" G-762

Musician: Bill Hill, music director, SS Francis & Clare

In Loving Memory of

Rose Mary Kavanaugh

November 16, 1919
September 5, 2016

THE LORD'S PRAYER

Our Father,
who art in heaven,
Hallowed be Thy Name.
Thy kingdom come,
Thy will be done on earth
As it is in heaven.
Give us this day
Our daily bread,
And forgive us
Our trespasses,
As we forgive those
Who trespass against us.
And lead us not
Into temptation,
But deliver us from evil.

DANIEL F. O'RILEY FUNERAL HOME



*Above: the Tombstone for **Rose Mary Kavanaugh** who was born on Nov. 16, 1919 and died on Sept. 5, 2016. Rose is buried in Calvary Cemetery in Indianapolis where her Brothers Vincent and Harry are also buried.*

Below: Page-1: The following letter was from Sr. Bernice Kavanaugh from the convent in Ferdinand to Louis Kavanaugh Jr. concerning the questions about the death of her brother Timothy and her younger sister Katherine from many years ago. Both Timothy and Katherine died when they were about 4 years old and buried near their parents John and Mary Lucy Kavanaugh.

Dear Louis,

Sorry if I have tried your patience. At 96, I'm not as speedy as of 69.

Timothy Alban was my "big" little brother. His baptismal at St. Peter's should show he was born June 2, 1898 and died before he was 4 years old. His death was caused by what at that time was termed "membrane croup". Must have been something related to pneumonia.

I could not tell you of the burial places of Timothy or Katherine. I know it was near the Kavanaugh plot, but whether it was Grandfather's or I doubt if dad had his own plot of ground at that time. The tombstones too were a mystery.

At that time, I think we were too poor. I just don't know.

Katherine was baptized at All Saints. Don't know if



Below - Page-2 of the letter from Sr. Bernice Kavanaugh to Louis Kavanaugh Jr.. This letter was written in response to an inquiry by Louis on the death of Sr. Bernice's brother Timothy and her sister Katherine. This talks about the days leading up to Katherine's death. This letter was written around the year 2000.

she was baptized Margaret Katherine
or K. - Margaret, Anyway she was
always called Katherine.

The date of her birth is correct,
She died of diphtheria Sept. 2 1918 at
3 years & 8 months old. & had the
most golden curls ever.

On Sunday she felt fretful &
cranky & cried to go, nitting with
me & my friends. I had to carry
her most of the way. Monday her
condition was worse. At some
time during the night old Dr.
Zett was called. He pronounced
it diphtheria, but as there were
no cases around he had no
serum. Katherine grew gradually
worse & died about noon the
next day. We were quarantined
so Mom bathed & dressed her. She was
laid out in the cradle & put in the
parlor. Mr. Spalding, the undertaker,
brought a little white casket in
his buggy & was followed to the
cemetery by Dad & grandpa. All
I know is that she was buried by
Timmy.

For the next 14 days grandpa
was our contact with the outside
world. When we returned to
school 2 weeks later we were
avoided for sometime for fear.

So sorry I'm not much help.

God love you. Sr. Bernice

Catechists bring years of experience to faith journeys

Jennifer Del Vecchio

For Pat Delaney, there was never a question of how long she'd volunteer to teach religious education.

Instead, it became how much more she would offer.

For Rose Kavanaugh, teaching adults and children about the Catholic Church is allowed her to share in others' journeys for 21 years.

Both women volunteer at St. Barnabas Parish in Indianapolis, where their longevity is well noted and well respected.

Finding their knowledge, long years of education and continued desire to help isn't common.

"You don't find it too often," said Father John Sciarra, a retired diocesan priest who knows both women after being their pastor

for many years. "I'm glad they are there. You could always count on them."

Karen Oddi, associate director for religious education for the Archdiocese of Indianapolis, said such longevity is unusual for volunteer catechists.

Oddi said the women are examples of giving their love and generosity and examples of lifelong learners who "continually participate in opportunities for formation and renewal."

"Given the number of years they have been involved with religious education, they have been part of both the pre- and post-Vatican II catechetical milieu. They have always been open to the latest ideas in enriching their ministries," Oddi said.

The women show no signs of stopping.

For the past 21 years, Kavanaugh has been teaching adults in the Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults process.

"It has been a tremendous form of learning for me," said Kavanaugh, 81. "I really feel by trying to help others or answer their questions it has helped me."

She's kept photo albums of many of the Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults classes, and as she pages through them she's quick to state what they were doing and point out those she knows.

Kavanaugh's history with St. Barnabas dates back to when she was a school-teacher at the parish school and a former Benedictine nun.

After 33 years in the convent, she left the order and began a career in social work. Eventually, she returned to teaching sixth-grade at St. Jude School in Indianapolis.

In 1990, she retired from St. Jude, but has continued tutoring various students and volunteering at St. Barnabas.

Kavanaugh said all her volunteer years have been blessings.

Her best advice is for volunteer catechists to realize they don't have all the answers.

"Folks appreciate the honesty and openness," she said.

The best part of teaching has been learning why people are interested in the Catholic Church and what led them to it, she said.

"For me, this [teaching] has helped me realize it's not the end of the road," she said. "There's always more we can learn and understand. We see the changes in the Church and see the Church history and realize that the Church is still surviving."

Kavanaugh said her faith has grown and she's realized that "good can come out of a bad situation. It might take time, years, but it happens."

Delaney, 75, has been a member of St. Barnabas Parish since it was founded in 1965. She began teaching religious education for children.

Currently, she plans to help the parish

with children who have missed their sacraments for some reason.

Delaney said her job as a catechist is fun and she loves the children.

"I think I just like it," she said about her many years of volunteering. "I never looked at it as a calling, but I guess it probably is. To me, it's just rewarding."

Delaney has fond memories of all the students in her classes and said that if you don't like kids, you shouldn't be a catechist.

She's also learned a lot more about her faith and said the students know more than people think they do.

Through her years of teaching, Delaney said she's learned to never become angry with a student no matter what they say or do.

"You have to accept them the way they are and eventually they become the picture of where you think they should be [in class work]," she said.

The mother of nine children, Delaney grew up in St. Patrick Parish in Indianapolis. Delaney said church was always a part of her life.

"I don't remember a time when it wasn't," she said.

In her own faith life, Delaney said she is always grateful that God has given her a chance to go to heaven.

"You could think about that forever," she said.

As for St. Barnabas, she wants to continue volunteering, whether it's in the office helping with various tasks, or helping children.

"This is a great place," she said.

Parishioners at St. Barnabas said they are glad the women are catechists.

"They are a great example for what we do as Christians," said Bruce Kennedy, a parishioner. "They are both great people and they know what they are teaching. They both share a real goodness about them." †



Photo by Jennifer Del Vecchio



Pat Delaney, left and Rose Kavanaugh are longtime catechists at St. Barnabas Parish in Indianapolis. Finding their experience and dedication for so many years isn't a common trend.

Rose Kavanaugh looks through memories of the many Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults classes that she helped teach during the past 21 years.