



**Sister Carla (M. Carlotta) Romero, OP**  
**Born to earthly life: July 15, 1914**  
**Religious profession: August 4, 1935**  
**Entered eternal life: January 25, 2012**

*Let us love one another,  
because love is God.*

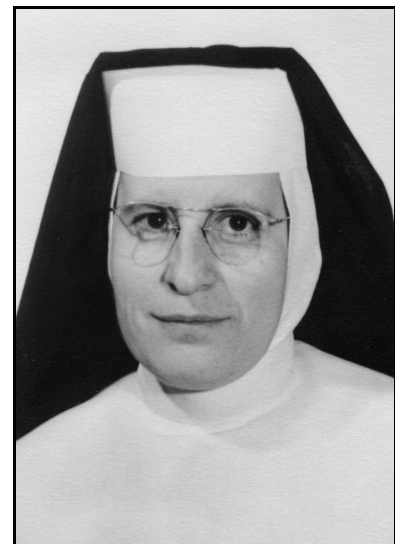
*1 John 4:7*

Eufrosinia Romero, daughter of Carlotta Velarde and Epifanio Romero, first saw the light of day in Santa Fe, New Mexico, on July 15, 1914. In a family which would eventually boast seven children, she was the first of four girls.

Taught by the Racine Dominicans at Our Lady of Guadalupe School, Eufrosinia let be known when she was just nine years old that she wanted to be a sister. The dream seemed a bit distant for a while, however, after her mother died when Eufrosinia was fourteen, and she was called on to help her father and an aunt in the care for her younger siblings. But four years later, in mid-November of 1932, she boarded the train and headed for Racine. The following August 4, she received the habit and the name Sister M. Carlotta of the Holy Name of Mary, and began her novitiate.

She had always found school somewhat difficult, and so it was presumed that Sister Carlotta would serve in domestic ministries.

But she dearly loved little children, and eventually begged to be allowed to resume her education. Meanwhile, she would grasp any opportunity to work



About 1960



1980

with children, and showed a special gift for helping those who were having trouble reading. After many summers, she finally completed her college work in 1974. In early spring before her graduation she wrote, "I realize now that my education has just begun. On April 28 my dream will come true, but I know that a fresh dream will take its place. With my education I hope to become a full-time teacher as well as to continue my involvement with the Latin American people. Above all, I hope to be able to help others learn how to dream dreams, too."

Her assignments had so far been mostly in Wisconsin, and mostly for brief periods — from 1935 to 1936 at Saint Mary's in Tomah;

from 1936 to 1937 at Saint John's in Hubbardston, Michigan; from 1937 to 1938 at Saint Benedict the Moor in Milwaukee; from 1938 to 1939 at Saint Bernard's in Madison; from 1939 to 1940 at Saint Clement's in Center Line, Michigan; from 1940 to 1941 at Saint Edward's in Racine; from 1941 to 1943 back at Saint Benedict's; from 1943 to 1944 at The Calaroga in Milwaukee (the congregation's boarding house for working girls); from 1944 to 1945 at Saint Edward's again; from 1945 to 1948 at Saint Francis Xavier in Merrill; from 1948 to 1949 at Saint Augustine's in Wausaukee; from 1949 to 1951 once again at Saint Benedict's; from 1951 to 1952 at Holy Angels in Milwaukee; from 1952 to 1953 at Saint Louis in Caledonia; from 1953 to 1958 at Saints Peter and Paul in Green Bay; from 1958 to 1960 at Saint Luke's in Plain; from 1960 to 1968 at Holy Name in Kimberly.



With a student at Siena Center, 1982

The late 1960s brought many changes in the Racine Dominican community, including freedom to choose one's own ministry in discernment with the community and the option to change one's name. At that point, Sister Carlotta shortened her religious name and became known as Sister Carla. In fall of 1968 she began a year of study at Dominican College, but the following April was asked to help

out at Saint Lucy's in Racine. As her dream of becoming a full-time teacher grew, she chose to minister in Detroit, where she could complete her studies at Madonna College. From 1969 to 1971 she served at Saint Leo's, and for the first semester of 1971 at Santa Maria School. She then joined her Racine Dominican sisters at Assumption Grotto, where she would minister until 1975. The spring of 1974 finally brought the coveted college degree from Madonna College, with majors in reading and Spanish, and Carla's dream of becoming a full-time primary teacher was fulfilled.



Golden Jubilee, 1985

In 1975 she moved to Chicago to teach at Saint Boniface School, and while there joined *Las Hermanas*, a national organization for Hispanic sisters. "Our goals are to engage Hispanic sisters in active ministry among Hispanos," she told the community, "to make more effective those non-Hispanos in the Hispano apostolate, to encourage and help each other in the task of cultural

identification, to share understanding and insights, to act as advocates for our people in our religious community and in our professional work, and to do what we are already doing, but possibly more effectively.”

This new commitment to Hispanic causes took her back to Albuquerque, New Mexico in 1977. There she served for a year at Saint Francis Parish, then for two years at Saint Mary’s, and finally for a year at San Martin.

After forty-six years in ministry, Sister Carla moved to Siena Center in 1981. She didn’t, however, give up teaching but turned her gifts to tutoring adults in English. She was often seen carrying handmade instructional materials as she set out for the homes of Siena Center’s Spanish-speaking workers. “She was always heading out to someone’s house armed with her big white teaching board to squeeze into that two-door car,” recalled Sister Vivian Giddings.

When asked what she enjoyed most about teaching, she would quickly respond, “Everything!”



About 1990



Diamond Jubilee, 1995, with S. Josephine Romero

As the century turned, it became evident that Carla’s memory was beginning to fail, and in May of 2011, when she could no longer navigate safely at Siena Center, she moved to Lincoln Lutheran’s Becker Shoop facility in Racine. Eventually she transferred to Kenosha Estates Living and Care Center, where her spunk and humor continued to thrive. “You never knew what she’s going to say,” chuckled Sister Vivian. The medical workers relied on special foods Sister Carla liked — chocolate milk, eggs, and drumsticks — to disguise the taste of her medications so they could get her to take them! And Sister Vivian would always take Carla’s

favorite treats with her when visiting, such as Sister Marlene Hetzel’s home-baked cookies. Pulling one from her pocket, Vivian would be rewarded with a spirited smirk and perhaps a teasing comment in Spanish.



Diamond Jubilee, 1995

Sisters Ellen Grace Rice, Carla Romero, Callista Schara, Cathy Grimm, Grace Gement, Monica Gabriel, Renata Hausladen, Catherine Verbeten, Barbara Messman, Catherine Wildenberg



Sharing cookies with S. Vivian Giddings

Known for her quick wit and indomitable spirit, Carla was never at a loss for a quick retort and could charm people whether in English or Spanish. Her sense of humor and spunk had served her well in her many missions and didn't fail her even in her dementia. "I really admired how she could tease people and make them laugh," remarked Sister Marlene.

But Sister Carla also "had a deep love of prayer," said her good friend Sister Vivian. Sister Vivian had visited her weekly for many years, and whenever she would ask, "Should we pray now?" Sister Carla invariably responded



Sister Carla with a friend at Kenosha Estates, 2006

with an enthusiastic, “Oh, yes!”

Sister Carla entered eternity on January 25, 2012. Her New Mexico sisters played prominent roles in her funeral liturgy, with Joyce Quintana and Dolores Catanach reading and Vivian Giddings preaching the homily. Her body was laid to rest in the community plot at Holy Cross Cemetery in Caledonia.