

Meet the Faculty and Staff of St. Rita Catholic School

Reception: My name is Claudia Hernandez and I am the secretary of St. Rita Catholic School. This is my 4th year to serve as secretary; I also served as Extended Care supervisor.



I live on the eastside of Fort Worth with my husband, Ambrocio. My children: Hazel graduated from St. Rita and Nolan Catholic High School; Aimee, a senior at Nolan; and my youngest, Michael, a freshman at Nolan also graduated from St. Rita. St. Rita has been a blessing to our family. We are very glad to be here! I look forward to serving you and your wonderful children.

Business Office: My name is Diane Hutto and I am the bookkeeper for St. Rita School. When I walked into St. Rita ten years ago, I had no idea what an important part of my life it would become. I love seeing the children on a daily basis and seeing their progress from year to year. Being involved with families and trying to help them achieve their goals of having their children at St. Rita has very special meaning to me. I am happy to be able to spend my time doing a job that I love!

Early Childhood:

Pre-K3: Edna Wiley, I am the newest member of the St. Rita family. I have been here since October, 2011. I am an active member of St. Patrick's Cathedral in downtown Fort Worth. I really enjoy teaching the Pre-K3 children.

Pre-K4: Hello, my name is Evelyn Alemán and I'm the Pre-K4 teacher of St. Rita Catholic School. I served the last three years as the Kindergarten teacher. I've taught Pre-K3 and 1st grade here at St. Rita as well as serving as extended care supervisor and school nurse and lunch coordinator.

I graduated from Republica de Colombia High School in Río Piedras, Puerto Rico. I received an associate at the University of Puerto Rico; my BS in Bilingual Education is from Texas Wesleyan University in Fort Worth, TX.

I live on the eastside of Fort Worth with my mother (Abuela), and my twins Erikha and Malik. They have attended St. Rita since they were 3 years old. We have enjoyed these past 10 years at St. Rita, our second home. I also have an adult son, Christian, who is married and lives in Lavon, TX. He and his wife Monica both coach and teach high school biology in Garland.

I look forward to working with you as you entrust your child into my care. Pre-K4 at St. Rita Catholic School is full of learning, fun, and many surprises.

Kindergarten: Hi! My name is Beth Nimz. I have been teaching school for 25 years. I've taught everything from two-year-olds to college sophomores. I have been teaching preschool for the last 15 years. I taught the four-year-old class at my previous school for 12 years and this is my fourth year to teach the three-year-olds at St. Rita's. I have twenty-year-old twins in college. It is very quiet at my house now. I earned my Bachelor's degree in English from TWU in Denton and my son is now following in my footsteps. My daughter is attending Tarleton University in Stephenville. I am also the Director of Liturgy at St. Rita Church.

Elementary

First Grade: Hello, my name is Melissa Thome. I have been teaching first grade at St. Rita Catholic School for 4 years. I am also the National Junior Honor Society sponsor. I am an alumnus of St. Rita as well as Nolan Catholic High School. I graduated from Texas Wesleyan University in 2006. I have been fortunate enough to educate many bright and wonderful students here at St. Rita. My favorite part of teaching is to see my students grow in education and in their catholic faith.

Second Grade: Hi! I am Margaret Cruse. My family and I moved here in 2000 from Corpus Christi where I taught at St. Patrick's Catholic School. I have a BA in Dance from the University of Texas at Austin and received my teaching certification from A&M – Corpus Christi. This is my twelfth year of teaching 2nd grade at St. Rita Catholic School. Being at St. Rita has been a joy. I love the family atmosphere and the wonderful faculty and staff. I love teaching second grade and watching these seven and eight year olds blossom into wonderful readers.

Third Grade: My name is Kathy Cihak and I'm the third Grade teacher at St. Rita Catholic School. Having been in education over 30 years, I'm always happy to meet a new class with its joys and challenges. Since my favorite activity is reading, I especially enjoy teaching reading and having our daily story time. I like seeing the delighted faces when the students are able to use math manipulatives to learn math concepts. My four children attended and graduated from St. Rita School. Presently, 3 grandchildren are also attending SRS so this school is home. I try to have my students feel the same way.

Fourth Grade: Hi! My name is Anne Christine Barbera and I am delighted to join the wonderful faculty and staff at St. Rita School. I am originally from Western Pennsylvania, and I am a graduate of the University of Notre Dame. I am also a member of the Alliance for Catholic Education program. I am looking forward to this year with all of the challenges and rewards I know it will provide. I love to teach children to reach for their full potential and accomplish their goals. By working together this year, I know these nine and ten year olds will be very successful.

Fifth Grade: My name is Bridget Ronan and this is my fourth year at St. Rita School. I was a member of the Alliance for Catholic Education program, a service-teaching program which serves Catholic schools across the United States. I graduated in 2008 from the University of Notre Dame with a B.A. in English and I graduated in 2010 with a M.A. in Education also from the University of Notre Dame. Originally, from southern California, I love reading, writing, and learning to cook new dishes for my community members who serve with me in the ACE program. I have greatly enjoyed the St. Rita family and am looking forward to the many adventures that our 5th grade class will share.

Junior High

English-language arts: My name is Mary Burns and I am a native of Fort Worth. I have begun my fourth year as a junior-high teacher at Saint Rita School. I am also the sixth grade home room and grade level math teacher. Teaching is a second career for me. My first career was in architecture, a field that provided me with many creative opportunities and the setting for meeting my husband of fourteen years. After twelve years in the business, I felt as though I had a new calling. After courses in education, I taught high school for five years before accepting the position at Saint Rita. In addition to the privilege of working with the superb faculty and staff at this school, I am also the very proud mother of two Saint Rita wildcats. My daughter and son have been students here since kindergarten and pre-k 4, respectively. I am blessed to be a part of this generous, creative, and faith-filled community. I am thrilled to share my love of the English language and a passion for reading and number sense with the students of Saint Rita Catholic School.

Religion and social studies: Chris Perez, I began teaching at St. Rita in the fall of 2010 as the science and math teacher for the middle school students. I transferred to religion and social studies for the 2011-2012 school year. I also help coach the boys' basketball teams here at St. Rita. I am a graduate of Texas A&M University; and an active member of St. Vincent de Paul Church in Arlington. I also assist with Camp Fort Worth for Diocesan high school students each summer.

Science and math: My name is Karla Garcia-Huerta and I am delighted to join the wonderful faculty and staff at St. Rita School. I was born in Monterrey, Nuevo Leon in Mexico and moved to the States when I was six years old. My home, however, is Raleigh, North Carolina because that is where I grew up, where my parents still live, and where I attended high school. I graduated from the University of Notre Dame with a Bachelor of Science degree. I am also a member of the Alliance for Catholic Education program, a service teaching program which serves Catholic schools in the United States. Apart from science, I love to draw and paint and also pursued a major in art while at Notre Dame. I

am looking forward to getting to know all of the wonderful students here at St. Rita and to all of the adventures we will have while learning science!

Accelerated math: My name is Lisa Millis and my family and I have been members of St. Rita Parish and School Community for 16 years. I teach Math 6, Advanced Math 7 (Pre-Algebra) and Algebra I. As a parent I want a learning environment for my four children where they are supported, and comfortable, yet also are challenged to reach their potential. As a teacher I strive to offer that same type of environment to my accelerated and advanced math classes here at Saint Rita Catholic School. We spend the first minute or so of each class with a Bible verse, reflection and prayers for our concerns. Students build computational skills while also focusing on understanding the concepts and making connections so they may think logically and be able to apply what they know to new situations. This will give them the excellent foundation they need for virtually all higher level mathematics.

Spanish: My name is Margaret Perera and I am beginning my 20th year as St. Rita School's Spanish teacher. I grew up in Chicago, and I received my B.A in Spanish from Rosary College (now Dominican University). I taught for 3 years at Resurrection High School. While doing post-grade studies at the Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México in Mexico City I met and married my husband. I lived in Mexico City for 11 years, and while I was there I taught English language in a small elementary school at the Seminario Menor, a high school for seminarians and other high school age boys. I have 2 sons, both St. Rita School graduates. My family and I lived in Harlingen, Texas before moving to Arlington in 1990. Nothing makes me happier than being able to share my love of the Spanish language and culture with children.

Life here at St. Rita has enriched my life. The parents and children are the best, it is my second home.

Music: My name is Mary C. Pastusek and I am a graduate of St. Rita School, class of '68'. I started teaching at St. Rita School in 1975 when I was a junior in college at Texas Wesleyan University. I have taught most of these 36 years here at St. Rita. I was married to a most wonderful man, named Ed, and we had two children, Kellie and Jon, both St. Rita attendees. Now I am a grandma with two grandbabies, Alexa, 3 years and Clara, 4 months. I spend my free time flying to North Carolina to visit them as well as help my son run our two family businesses.

I really enjoy my time teaching at St. Rita because I have my very own music classroom in the gym and I have the distinct honor to teach and be entertained by your lovely children. We fill our music days, Tuesday and Thursdays, with singing, dancing and playing instruments. We end our week with a

heartwarming Friday Liturgy prepared by the children themselves each week along with the guidance of their religion teachers. And our most favorite times of the year are the musicals, Christmas and spring. It is a challenge to coordinate these shows, but the joy of watching it all come together under the leadership of the kids is worth the effort for sure.

Physical Education: My name is Linda Reed and this is my fourth year at St. Rita. I have coached the volleyball, basketball and track teams during this time.

I graduated from Poly high School. I received a BS degree from Texas Wesleyan with a double major in Physical Education and History. Later, I received my MA from Texas Wesleyan with a major in Counseling. My husband and I live in Arlington with a neurotic dog and somewhat normal cats. I spend my spare time reading, working on our genealogy, and shopping.

I look forward to working with our student athletes in all our sport programs, as well as encouraging our future athletes in the lower grades to start planning to play on one of our sports teams.

Technology: My name is Tina Hampton. I have been serving St. Rita School for the past thirteen years. I began as an Early Childhood aide, and then I was the school secretary. I went back to school, and am now the computer teacher and medical records coordinator. Both of my daughters have gone through St. Rita and have been very successful in high school and college. I believe I have one of the best positions, because I get to work with all of the children in the school from 3 year olds to 14 year olds. It is my goal to have all students ready for any high school they choose to attend.



Library: Hello! My name is Robin Bolliger and I am the Librarian here at St. Rita School. For the past 13 years I have been blessed to be a part of such a wonderful community and family. After working as a Kindergarten Aide for approximately 2 years, I then moved to my current position as the Librarian. Several of my other job assignments include lunch monitoring for all lunches, working the Extended Care Program and producing the school yearbook. During the summer months, I open the library one day a week so the students can come and check out books.

The school and church have always been near and dear to me. My husband and I were married at St. Rita Church in 1986 and our two children attended St. Rita School from K-8th grade. I always thought I would leave St. Rita after my son graduated from 8th grade; however, I am still here because it is such a loving and nurturing community, for our students as well as our faculty and staff. It is home to me and I know you will have that same feeling too when you walk

through our doors. I feel very blessed to be a member of this family and to share the joy of learning with your children.

Sr. Kay Jo Evelo: Hello, my name is Sister Kathryn Evelo, better known as Sister Kay Jo. I am a Sister of the Holy Spirit and Mary Immaculate from San Antonio, Texas.

Terre Haute, Indiana is my birthplace. We moved to Texas when I was two years old. I grew up and went to school in Houston. I attended college in San Antonio as a Sister. I received my BA and MA from Incarnate Word University in San Antonio. Later I received my certification for Principal-ship from Our Lady of the Lake University. I served as principal for 23 years.

My teaching career has been in Mississippi, Louisiana and Texas. This is my 13th year at St. Rita. I taught PE for the first 5 years, 4th grade for 8 years, and this is my first year teaching only Religion. My life after school has been as Co-Athletic Director, coaching several sports and tutoring when necessary.

Aide: My name is Sharen Mobley. I have been a teachers' assistant at St. Rita's for ten years. I work with Kindergarten, First and Second grade and am a lunch room coordinator. My children both attended St. Rita's from kindergarten through eighth grade. All through their years at St. Rita's I volunteered as a room parent, president of the Advisory Council, Home and School president, Las Vegas Night Chairman, Girl Scout leader and other numerous activities. After many years of volunteering, I found that working with the children at St. Rita was very rewarding and decided to join the wonderful staff.

Lunch: My name is Andrea Rojas. I have been working at St. Rita for five years as Lunch coordinator and as a Pre-K Aide. I am married to Eddy, my high school sweetheart, and we have two daughters that attend St. Rita – Alexandra is in the 8th grade and Ariana is in the 2nd grade.

Development: My name is Adriana Rogers and my family and I have been a part of St. Rita parish for eight years and St. Rita School for six years. This is my third year working at St. Rita; I am so excited about development. My favorite part is capturing the children in photos during various events and projects. I can't wait to get a snapshot of your little one.