

ALUMNI SPOTLIGHT

Ilona Ludanyi, SRS Class of 2014, grew up in the halls of St. Rose School. “I remember St. Rose as my first family. I grew up there. My mother was constantly volunteering to help out with my older sister Lizzy’s class at lunch duty, as a Room Mom and with various other school events. When I was a toddler, I spent most of my time there. I knew everyone and everyone knew me. The loving atmosphere of the school was comforting and nurturing. It fostered so many friendships that are still strong today.”

At age four Ilona entered St. Rose Preschool and continued her learning and spiritual journey through eighth grade. When asked who or what made the most impact on her life during her years at St. Rose School Ilona said “All of the teachers at St. Rose were especially caring. It was always easy to talk with them, especially in the upper-grades when we were starting to become responsible for our own personal school experience. The teacher who had the most specific impact on me was my First Grade teacher, Mrs. Bokuniewicz (lovingly called Mrs. Bee). She always had an exceptionally kind attitude and made learning in her bee themed room fun and exciting. In addition to being a wonderful and engaging teacher, she instilled Catholic values at a young age. I felt that we had a special relationship as she always took the time to encourage me and continued to show interest in my life as I grew up. Even now in high school, running into her in the grocery store gives me a wonderful chance to catch up with the teacher who made me love going to school and showed me that the ties I formed in elementary school will never break.”

Now a Senior at Immaculate High School, Ilona has been very active in Language Arts and Music through her years. She has continued service outreaches through National Honor Society and Tri-M Music Honor Society, helping area organizations such as Dorothy Day House and CT Children’s Medical Center. She was also involved in Immaculate High School’s Prayer Book Leadership Team working with fellow SRS alumnae Arianna Shovak, Katy Cassetta and Caitlin White to compile a collection of student written prayers dedicated to Monsignor Weiss.

Staying involved with the arts is a continuation of the seeds that were planted at St. Rose School, according to Ilona. She has received Distinguished Honors all semesters and was recognized as a student sage scholar by the Sage Colleges 2017. Nominated by the Seven Angels Theater for Best Supporting Actress in a play – Portia, Julius Caesar, and part of the cast who received the Seven Angels Theater Award for Best Classical Play, Julius Caesar, and the Seven Angels Theater Award for Best Classical Musical Fiddler on the Roof, Ilona is excited to pursue an Acting Major at Nazareth College beginning in the Fall of 2018.

When asked what advice she would give to current SRS 8th graders as they prepare to enter high school, Ilona said “Follow your dreams. Anything is possible if you put the work in. Don’t be afraid that you are not good enough because if you weren’t, you would not have gotten this far. “God bless and Good luck Ilona!