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A parochial school teacher in her early years, Sister Rose undertook a study of how Catholic textbooks portrayed Jews and Judaism for her 1961 doctorate at St. Louis University, finding extensive evidence of "the teaching of contempt" (Jules Isaac). The result was a life-long campaign to overcome prejudice and build constructive relations between Christians and Jews. A documentary film about her life, "Sister Rose's Passion," won an award at the Tribeca Film Festival in 2004 and was nominated for an Academy Award.

Sr. Rose taught for many years in the program of the Institute for Judeo-Christian Studies at Seton Hall University in South Orange, New Jersey. She was the recipient of numerous honors and awards from both Christian and Jewish sources. The Rose Thering Endowment for Jewish-Christian Studies was established in her honor at Seton Hall in 1992.