



## IHM Sisters Then & Now June 2014



Sister Evelyn Booms grew up on a small farm near Harbor Beach, Mich. She and her seven siblings attended a one-room school, where she had the same teacher for nine years.

She attended Our Lady of Lake Huron High School, where the IHMs taught. She was already familiar with them because the sisters had also taught catechism at her church, but becoming a nun had not been on Sister Evelyn's mind. She recalls, however, her father saying of her, "that one's going to be our nun."

Near the end of the senior year Sister Ann Loretta, noticing that Evelyn was "stewing" about the possibility of becoming a nun, invited her to visit the convent in Monroe. While there Evelyn met Mother Theresa and got measured for the postulant garb!

On arriving back home she surprised her family by announcing that that she was going to enter the convent.

During one of her first days at the Motherhouse, the writings of Augustine were read as part of the meditation. Sister Evelyn was so inspired that she requested his name as part of her religious name: Marie Augustine.

Her first mission was at St. Mary of Redford, followed by St. Charles of Coldwater, Mich. From there, she went to Mobile, Ala., to teach and went on to become principal at Our Lady of Assumption in Albuquerque, N.M.

Shortly after arriving in Albuquerque, Sister Evelyn had accepted an invitation to be on the school board for the Archdiocese of Santa Fe. When the position for the Superintendent of Schools for the Archdiocese opened up, she was asked to consider that position;

The board president invited her to dinner to talk about the position. "I said, 'If you want to take me out to dinner that's fine, however my thought now is no.'"

But Sister Evelyn reconsidered. "I said, 'If you still want me I feel I should say yes.'" She oversaw three high schools and 21 elementary schools, in Albuquerque and in the mountains and outskirts of Santa Fe, N.M. After seven years, she felt called to do

something totally different and became a rector at a women 's residence hall at Notre Dame.

From there, she became the coordinator of St. Mary Conference Center on the grounds of the Motherhouse. During that time, Sister Evelyn took classes in spiritual direction and received training in Healing the Inner Child Workshops. She was asked to provide programs on spiritual direction for *Kaleidoscope:IHM Resources*, which led to working full time in adult spirituality.

Sister Evelyn happily recalls her years in the IHM community, saying, "It's been a blessed life for me. Never a dull moment." Her greatest joy was "being with our sisters on staff at the conference center. The togetherness of the group, it wasn't like 'my part's done; you do your part.' We formed a really strong community. That was a blessed experience."

