



Sister Jane Farrell was born in Detroit and attended Gesu Elementary School and Immaculata High School. She joined the IHM community right after high school and she laughs as she says she “lasted for two weeks.”

She was terribly homesick. She called her mother who came right away to pick her up. Sister Jane’s heart was set on attending University of Michigan and becoming a dental hygienist, but she went to Marygrove College and fell in love with it. She earned her bachelor’s degree in teaching and taught for two years in the Detroit Public Schools.

On her way to California with two friends, Sister Jane decided to return to the Motherhouse to join the community, an emotional decision that felt right but could not be articulated. As a postulant, she taught in Monroe. As a second year novice, she taught in Dexter, Mich. Later, she taught in Detroit, Mount Morris, Mich., and, “for six great years,” at Immaculata High School. “The kids were wonderful and the faculty was great.” She enjoys keeping in touch with her students.

Sister Jane earned her doctorate in history from University of Michigan and taught at Marygrove and at Siena Heights. She ministered briefly as assistant to the president of St. Edward’s University in Austin, Texas, but the heat was unappealing and after six months of not seeing a student, she returned the Midwest. For the next 10 years, she ministered as principal of Immaculate Heart of Mary High School in Westchester, Ill., and spent another 10 years teaching at Mother McAuley High School in Chicago.

Following a sabbatical year, she went to the Motherhouse as the IHM archivist before returning to Chicago where she volunteered, helping those less fortunate. She came home to the Motherhouse four years ago when she turned 80.

Sister Jane says, “I think the greatest joy of religious life is your relationship with God.” It was essential for her to be part of the community in order to have that relationship. When she joined, she says, “We lived in a different Church. It didn’t encourage people to have individual relationships with God. You did it through the Church and its institutions.”

Sister Jane spent time with both the Adrian Dominicans and the Mercy Sisters and feels her views were broadened because of these experiences. “Religious women all have one thing in common and that is God. But we approach it in different ways.”





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The highlight of being a part of the IHM community for Sister Jane is the Jubilarian celebration. "There you feel the true depths of what it means to be part of the community. Somehow you know you're part of something bigger than yourself." During Community Days when the congregation comes together, Sister Jane says with great emotion, "you feel the holiness of the community. We don't all agree but somehow or another you knew these are women who are committed."