

**IHM Sisters Then & Now**  
February 2012



**Sister Joyce (Rose Anthony) Durosko, IHM,** grew up in Akron, Ohio, during The Great Depression. Joyce, her older brother, Phillip, and two younger sisters, Rita and Patricia, all attended Catholic schools, even though money was very tight.

“Mother managed the family’s slim budget with the precision of a CPA,” Sister Joyce recalls. Her father worked 42 years at Firestone and never missed a day of work. He was also a pro golfer and loved sports, which is where she learned to love sports.

Her father would practice hitting golf balls into the woods and pay the children a nickel each to retrieve them. Sister Joyce says, “I loved the woods. We would climb the trees and play in the stream, catching frogs and snakes. This is where I first learned to love and appreciate our environment.”

In grade school her teachers were St. Joseph Sisters from Rocky River in Cleveland. In high school she went to St. Mary in Akron and was taught by IHMs. “We had the best and brightest teachers at that school. Due to state regulations, all teachers had to have degrees so the best-educated IHMs were sent there to teach.”



When she told her parents she wanted to become an IHM, her father gave her his permission on two conditions: that she would be the best IHM, and as a teacher she would always be fair.

“After every school year was over, I would tell my students the promise I made to my father and ask them if I had been fair,” Sister Joyce said. “They always responded that I had been.”

Her teaching assignments began in 1950 and were at St. Rose in Detroit, St. Joseph in Trenton and Hall of the Divine Child in Monroe. The Hall was an all-boys boarding school and Sister Joyce recalls her love of sports helped her relate well to the boys. She coached the basketball team, ice skated with them on the pond, went to all the sports games and helped them learn to march. (See related story last page: Mother’s Day Parade at HDC.)

She went to Chicago to teach at St. Felicitas. She taught at St. Mary in Monroe, IHM High School in Westchester, Ill., Marygrove on the Monroe campus, and Marian High School in Bloomfield Hills. While in Chicago, she became familiar with the works of Teilhard de Chardin, a French theologian and Jesuit priest, especially through his book *The Phenomenon of Man*. Sister Joyce explains, “He taught about the evolution of the Earth and the whole concept [of sustainability] that we all accept today. This time period was life-changing for me.”

For the next several years, she ministered in administrative roles at Luke Powers High School in Flint, IHM High School in Westchester, St. Stephen Indian School and St. Stephen Indian Education Association in Wyoming, and Nouvel Catholic High School in Saginaw. She also spent a year of renewal at the Jesuit School of Theology, receiving a certificate in theology.

At the St. Stephen’s Indian School in 1974, Sister Joyce worked among the Arapaho and Shoshone people on the Wind River Reservation in Wyoming. They were very poor and uneducated. Working with the Jesuits, she received a \$4.2 million grant from the U.S. government to build a new school for the tribes.

“That project was my pride and joy. The board gave me the responsibility of working with the architect to design it. As the project director, I went to Michigan State



University and looked at the way they handled their biological system of water discharge using bacteria to break down the waste so it could be used for watering the grounds. With my background in teaching science, it was all very exciting to see this happen and to be a

part of it,” Sister Joyce recalls. It was here she was introduced to computers. They used them as a way of projecting space requirements while building the school.

She also recalls how it felt to be a minority. There were very few white people at St. Stephen’s Indian School.

In 1984 she ministered in helping to consolidate three Catholic high schools into Nouvel Catholic High School in Saginaw, and a year later St. Mary Academy and Catholic Central High Schools in Monroe. In 1995 she was named director of St. Mary Center.

Over the years, Sister Joyce earned a bachelor’s degree from Marygrove College, a master’s degree in biology from St. Mary’s University of Minnesota, an Ed.S. degree from University of Michigan and a certificate in theological studies from Jesuit School of Theology, Berkeley, Calif.

From 1995-2009 Sister Joyce ministered as the president and later as a board member for Family Counseling and Shelter Services. She served on civic committees such as United Way and Habitat for Humanity. In 2010 she was named Habitat’s Volunteer of the Year.

Sister Joyce’s mother, Agnes, came to live in the IHM Health Care Center in 1998 and died in 2001 at age 95. “It was so great to live with my mother as an adult since I joined the community when I was 17 years old. She was a very positive and upbeat person who endeared herself to the residents and staff,” Sister Joyce said.



In 2009 Sister Joyce retired to the Motherhouse where she remains actively involved with committee work, serves as researcher and graphics designer for the sisters’ website, and does volunteer work in the Monroe community.

## Mother's Day Parade at Hall of the Divine Child

Every Mother's Day the Hall of the Divine Child students would march in a parade. Company A included seventh and eighth grade boys, Company B was fifth and sixth grade, Company C was third and fourth, and Company D was first and second graders. The companies would show their military drills to the parents when they came for their visit. After the parade, recognition would be given to the company that performed the best. Usually Company A would be awarded the trophy because the boys were older and could perform better.

I was assigned to work with the little first and second graders in Company D. I practiced and practiced with them for days. I told them they could perform better than



those bigger boys! One of the little boys, John, was the captain of Company D and he would call out the command to turn right, turn left. On the day of the parade, their shoes were shined and they were ready to go!

It rained the night before and there were puddles of water everywhere. I told them if they saw a puddle to march right through it. They were a little apprehensive, since they were proud of how shiny their shoes were. The big boys could maneuver easily around the water puddles but I knew the little ones wouldn't be able to.

So it was time for them to march. They did their drills and marched on – right through the puddles! They marched in a very straight line. The parents watching went crazy! They clapped and clapped for Company D and how those little boys marched! And of course the big kids marched around the puddles, weaving back and forth.

When the parade was over, the trophy was awarded to Company D, the first time in the history of the HDC they had won the award!