



Sister Margaret (Peggy) Schmidt grew up in Des Plaines, Ill. She has two older sisters and many nieces, nephews, grand- and great-grand nieces and nephews. Her first encounter with the IHM Sisters was at the 1956 Summer School of Catholic Action in Chicago.

She entered the IHM congregation in 1963 after graduating from Marygrove College with a bachelor's degree in economics. She taught at St. Mary Academy and then at Marian High School, in Bloomfield Hills, Mich., which she loved.

When her father's health declined, she returned to Illinois to be closer to him and taught at Immaculate Heart of Mary High School in Westchester. She then studied at The Catholic University of America in Washington, D.C., expanding her study of post-Vatican II theology. Her experience of living in D.C. offered a greater sensitivity to the local racism and other injustices throughout the broader world.

After receiving her master's degree, Sister Peggy returned to Marian to teach religion and later served as an assistant principal there. She taught the core values of the Gospel in new, integrating and engaging ways in the spirit of Vatican II.

She appreciated the shift in religious life. "We were ready for the changes called for by Vatican II," she notes. "As religious we were to be *with* people. All are called to holiness. We were not the only members of the Church with this invitation. We did not belong on a pedestal. I sensed the need for us to let go of wearing our habits as a way of clearly showing our desire to be among the people and not separate from them."

Sister Peggy was an assistant in the IHM Social Justice Office where she got involved in the needs of the City of Detroit and with the women's movement and the early meetings about women's ordination. She also became assistant vicar for parishes to Bishop Thomas Gumbleton in the Archdiocese of Detroit.

Later she served in Madison, Wis., as the director of diocesan education. During a sabbatical in Toronto, she attended the Spiritual Integration Program while completing a master's degree in theology. Thereafter, she became a spiritual director following her participation in the Colombiere Spiritual Direction Internship, the Ignatian Spiritual Exercises Institute in Guelph, Ontario, and other Ignatian Spirituality workshops.

As a spiritual director she joined the spirituality team at Colombiere Center in Clarkston, Mich., and later served as director of adult formation at parishes in Illinois and Wisconsin.

In 1993 she became the coordinator of the IHM Visitation Center of Prayer and Spirituality, and served there for the next nine years. A few years later she helped develop the IHM Events Planning office.



Sister Peggy knows how blessed she is. Her greatest joy is being aware of the abundant gifts of God. At the same time, her heart holds the horrible injustices that so many people endure.



Peggy, center, with her sisters Lillian (left) and Eleanor (Right)

An artisan at St. Joseph (Michigan) art fair