



Sister Frances Mlocek grew up in River Rouge, Mich., the youngest of six. Her father and mother passed away when she was young, so she went to live with her eldest sister and brother-in-law. While she was sitting in her classroom during the fifth grade, she had a deep sense that she wanted to be like the sister who was teaching her. She was drawn to her teacher's kindness and manner.

During high school, Sister Fran participated in a work-study program, interning with a bookkeeper at Allen Park Furniture Store. She went on to learn how to manage a business and later interned with a CPA during the day while attending the University of Detroit business college in the evening.

The summer before completing her degree in accounting, she enjoyed a 10-week trip through Europe with a friend. She returned to work at the public accounting office, but after a short time, she knew she needed to pursue her religious vocation. "It was one of those deeply felt spiritual initiatives that said, 'This is what you're going to do, Fran.'"

Entering the community as a young adult of 24 made the transition smooth for Sister Fran. "I just sort of went with the flow. I very much appreciated the opportunity for prayer," she says. She was delighted to have the time to reflect and immerse herself in Scripture. Because she came to the community with a bachelor's degree, her talents and skills were used assisting a Jesuit priest on campus and working in the business office during her postulancy and novitiate. She remained in the business office for several years as the chief accountant and the treasurer for the IHM congregation. She led the transition from doing everything by hand to using machines. "I can recall our cumbersome Burroughs Sensimatic, the first accounting machine," she laughs.

She went to work for the Archdiocese in Detroit to audit parishes and then became the assistant executive director for the Leadership Conference of Women Religious (LCWR), where she also advised women religious on their finances. While in Washington, D.C., she was invited to join a committee on church accounting practices that had been started by the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishop (USCCB).

Sister Fran served as the director of finance for the USCCB for 10 years before being elected to the IHM Leadership Council for two six-year terms. After her terms in Leadership, she worked as the bookkeeper and did financial reporting for the wards of Compassionate Companions for five years.

Sister Fran's greatest joy since joining the community has been working in social justice outreach and "and our attempts to be there for the poor."



IHM Sisters Then & Now July 2020

She is grateful the opportunities she has had to deepen her spirituality and have a more in-depth relationship with God.

“This business of living is quite a challenge, and how to do it well and in companionship with others is the whole purpose of my life,” she says.

