

2020 JUBILARIANS



# 2020 Jubilarians

*As of July 1, 2020*

## 75-Year Jubilarians

### Sisters:

George Ellen Brannick  
Marie Clark  
Gloria (Roberta Marie) Glinski  
Rita (Marie Ambrose) Rennell  
Eileen (De la Salle) Semonin

## 60-Year Jubilarians

### Sisters:

Barbara (Ann Barbara) Beesley  
Paula (Marie Paula) Cooney  
Diann (Bernard Therese) Cousino  
Margaret (Michael Francis) Devaney  
Rita (Mary Dolors) Fisher  
Marjorie (Katherine Drexel) Polys

## 70-Year Jubilarians

### Sisters:

Marion (Mary Mel) Duggan  
Regina (Regina Irene) Fanning  
Joan (Marie Trinite) Glisky  
Irene (Irene Therese) Gumbleton  
Therese (Therese Michelle) LeBlanc  
Margaret (James Agnes) McGinley

## 50-Year Jubilarian

### Sister:

Kathy (Kathleen) Grosh

### *Jubilarian biographies written by*

*Claudia Bennett*

*Margaret Chapman, IHM*

*Anne Crimmins, IHM*

*Marianne Gaynor, IHM*

*Irene Gumbleton, IHM*

*Mary Jane Herb, IHM*

*Helen Ingles, IHM*

*Carol Janowiak, IHM*

*Victoria Koivu-Rybicki, IHM Associate*

*Therese LeBlanc, IHM*

*Patricia McCluskey, IHM*

*Margaret McGinley, IHM*

*Candyce Rekart, IHM*

*Ellen Rinke, IHM*

*Gloria Rivera, IHM*

*Loretta Schroeder, IHM*

*With assistance from*

*Patricia Aseltyne, IHM*

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*Suzanne Sattler, IHM*



*What comes to your mind and heart when you realize you are celebrating 75 years as an IHM? What kept you going?*

I have special gratitude for the long life God has given me. I believe in a personal God who knows and cares for me and has always been there for me. Seventy-five years is a long time and I'm kind of "worn out." I can't get too excited about this celebration. I'm 93 years old; all my brothers and sisters, most of my classmates and many colleagues are gone to God and I sometimes ask myself why I'm still alive and in good health.



I always loved my ministry of teaching for 51 years. Although I had some different summer experiences of doing social work, helping with a census and visiting the homebound, it was teaching that brought me the greatest joy. The little children teach you a lot. I always remember with the first-graders, about Thanksgiving, I would put a book on every child's desk and I would hear this little sound from them – they were reading! After all the preparation of learning letters and words on flashcards every day, to see them actually reading brought such joy. I loved it! I also worked with wonderful teachers and we have kept up our connections.

Growing up, we were lucky that faith and religious values were such a part of our family life. There were some hard times, some sad deaths and other difficulties, but I always had that feeling there was someone to whom we could go.

Entering the community, I have been blessed to share life with wonderful sisters and have had good friends with whom I've worked and enjoyed vacations over the years. My nieces and nephews still come to visit me.

Looking back, I remember all these relationships. These connections are helpful as we suffer the loss of sisters here.

Since retirement, I continue to enjoy the ways I can serve assisting our sisters. I enjoy

our prayer and sharing stories during our meals together, some TV, reading and a little art.

*Looking back over these years, how has your understanding of God changed?*



God is more real to me. Growing up, God was just part of the daily routine. Now it's like God is my very close friend. We've grown in intimacy and I hope I've grown in trust. I look back with gratitude and amazement. Call it all a blessing.

*If you were teaching now, what would you want to teach about life from the wisdom of your experience?*

Don't give up! Appreciate all that you do have. Don't worry if you're not doing things the way you think they should



be done; look at it as an opportunity for God to take over. God is above all the difficulties and circumstances you are facing; you don't need to be tied down to what happens. God knows and cares for you.

God is with you.

# MARIE CLARK

Sister Mary Assumption's sense of humor enthralled Sister Marie Clark and convinced her while she was in the third grade that she wanted to be a sister.

Sister Marie grew up outside Philadelphia in Roxborough with her two younger brothers, parents, grandparents and great-grandmother. She walked four miles a day to attend Holy Family School in Manayunk, where the IHMs taught. She attended Hallahan Catholic Girls' High School, getting there by bus and trolley.

At first, she wanted to be a lay teacher but then decided she wanted to be like Sister Mary Assumption. "It was an inner conviction that this is where I belong. It felt very secure and right," she recalls. Her parents were happy with her decision.

Sister Marie entered the Immaculata IHMs right out of high school. She fondly remembers her charges while she was a postulant. Taking care of the elder sisters inspired and prepared her for the future.

Sister Marie taught at several different elementary schools in Pennsylvania before making her final vows. During that time, she deepened her relationship with God. "I leaned on God many times with the challenges that came along with classrooms and different grades," she reflects.

"It's a closeness to God within myself. It's a kind of communication ... awareness that God is with me, supporting me."



She taught in Pennsylvania for another five years following final vows. After a two-month preparation, she went to Santiago, Chile, where she taught high school during the week and religious education on weekends with the Maryknoll Fathers. After three earthquakes (and worrying her mother for six years), Sister Marie returned home to teach seventh grade from February to June. She then ministered for 15 years at a number of high schools, teaching

English and Spanish, supervising the yearbook and serving as activities director, principal and vice principal in Pennsylvania, Florida and New Jersey.

When her father died, she took a leave of absence to care for her mother, who had had a stroke. After her leave, she went back to teaching while she discerned her future.



She transferred to the Monroe IHM community in 1988 and started working at St. Mary Conference Center. After nine years, Sister Marie took a sabbatical to Berakah, N.H., where she "gained spiritual wings." She

returned for a year to teach at St. Mary of Redford before ministering at a conference center in the foothills in Virginia. After nine months, she left for St. Jude and Immaculate Conception parishes in Mineral, Va., where she stayed for 13 years, ministering as pastoral associate/faith formator and spiritual director. In August 2012, she retired to the Motherhouse and is still there.



Sister Marie is grateful for "my vocation, my love of God, my health, my energy, my love of people, community and my discernment and decision to transfer to the Monroe IHMs." Her greatest joy has been "teaching and interaction in community life, in both IHM communities." She looks forward to "growing in my love of God."

Sister Gloria Glinski and her two brothers grew up in Hamtramck, Mich. She attended St. Ladislaus School but transferred to Girls' Catholic Central High School for her junior and senior years; the IHM Sisters taught her there.

She had an aunt who was an IHM and she "always knew the blue sisters." She remembers being with her mother and being mesmerized while watching a group of IHM Sisters get on a bus on Woodward Avenue.



She continued teaching for a total of 36 years – at Michigan schools in Battle Creek, Ann Arbor, Jackson, Birmingham, Bloomfield Hills and Flint, as well as a year at St. Rene in Chicago – before she felt called to a new ministry.

Sister Gloria went back to school to study gerontology. "Through my mother, I began to see the needs of the elderly more clearly," she says.

"I was just drawn to be a sister," she notes. "I think it was the calling I had when I was just a little girl." She joined the community with her parents' blessing just a couple of months after graduating from high school.

"My dad was extremely happy about it," Sister Gloria recalls, because she would be in the community with his sister. She thought she knew the kind of life she was going to have, but there were a few surprises. She said the time was challenging but the sisters came together to support one another.

Sister Gloria's first mission was teaching second grade at St. Joseph in Monroe. Following her profession, she taught second grade at St. Boniface in Detroit for one year before going to teach second grade at St. Stephen in Port Huron for seven "happy and experiential" years.

One of her fondest memories was the time the sixth grade class escorted her second grade class to the lake for a picnic. After St. Stephen, Sister Gloria taught second grade at Our Lady of Good Counsel for five years. She enjoyed her second-graders, getting them ready for their First Communion.



She then ministered at Marian Place in Monroe for two years. This was followed by five years as the bookkeeper at Cadillac Nursing Home in Detroit prior to a year's sabbatical. She spent the next five years in Florida, caring for the elderly and serving in pastoral care. While in Winter Haven, Fla., she worked with Eileen Markey, IHM, and Therese Hart, IHM, visiting parishioners who were unable to make it to Mass every Sunday. "I wanted to be there with them and for them," she said.

She returned to Monroe in 1997 and ministered in Pastoral Care within the Motherhouse. She was a lector at liturgies and was respected for her great ability to proclaim "the Word." Sister Gloria is retired at the Motherhouse and has enjoyed reading, with a special fondness for the work of Joan Chittister, OSB.



Sister Gloria enjoyed the family-like feeling at the convents and having the opportunity to explore nearby areas. She is grateful for "the call to come to the IHM community. It has been a blessing in my life."

Sister Rita Rennell grew up in Detroit with her six siblings, taught by IHMs at St. Mary of Redford. She loved their outgoing personalities and kindness and was drawn to their holiness. She and her mother talked about a vocation. After high school, she attended Marygrove College, where she enjoyed an active social life. She entered the community after her sophomore year.



All-told, she ministered at the Motherhouse for 10 years.

In a note to Sister Mary Jo Maher, IHM, she said, "When I retired from St. Mary's Health Care Center, I searched out a return to the missions. You said, 'Think Africa!' WOW! I went from Geriatric Nursing to a Maternity Clinic. What a gift ..."

"It was more than just the teaching. It was giving my life to God," Sister Rita says. After one year of studying religious life and Scriptures, she set out on her first mission, teaching at St. Mary in Monroe. Subsequent teaching assignments were at elementary schools in Detroit, Flint and Port Huron, Mich., and then teaching high school for six years at St. Martin in Detroit. When one of the sisters teaching at El Colegio La Merced in Cayey, Puerto Rico, became ill, Sister Rita was assigned to replace her.

Sister Rita spent eight years in South Africa, ministering as a nurse, a missionary, in pastoral care/education and taught domestic skills to young mothers. She also ministered as a librarian at the seminary of the Oblates of Mary Immaculate (OMI) priests – the first non-OMI to hold the position.



She returned to the IHM Motherhouse in 1996, serving as a driver for Motherhouse residents, lectured at Mass and helped with evening prayer. Sister Rita also loved to sew. "I found a need for sewing on name tags and hemming or repairing sisters' clothes," she recalls. "I especially enjoyed making and dressing the IHM dolls and often helped Sister Bea Faucher. I'm happy to say I helped make one for a 'sister doll' exhibit in Paris and also dressed one for an exhibit here in America."

After more than four years in Puerto Rico, where she taught high school, worked in the school library and coached the volleyball team, she returned to Michigan. She taught high school at St. Gregory in Detroit then at Marian in Bloomfield Hills. After 10 years, she left Marian to complete her nursing degree and nursed at the Motherhouse for a few years before becoming the director of nursing.

Her page in the IHM Book of Life notes that she found God "... in the beautiful children I taught to read and spell and cipher. ... In the Motherhouse



Health Care Center as I nursed the sick and frail elderly IHM Sisters. ... God's presence was felt among the Zulu people, with whom I walked and nursed and taught."

Eileen Semonin's early years hold good memories, secure in her family home in Akron, Ohio. She and her sister, Mary Catherine, and brothers, Chuck and Dick lost their parents and then their stepmother by the time Eileen was 14. The four moved into an apartment and Mary Catherine managed the household and worked outside of the home. Eileen and her brothers held part-time jobs. "I never felt a sense of anger; God was there and got me through it," she says. "I have a lot of peace and no regrets."



Leaving Monroe, she participated in a summer foreign study program followed by a year of renewal.

She moved to Apopka, Fla., for six years, ministering in a migrant clinic and four years as a public health nurse. She was then elected provincial of the Southwest Province. Eileen returned to the area and ministered in a variety of ways:

facilitating retirement workshops, working at Ghandy Health Clinic, tutoring in Luna Pier, volunteering at the HIV outreach program, as a contingency nurse at Family Medical Center in Temperance and ministering to the migrants in Monroe County.

At 18, Eileen was engaged to Jack, who was serving overseas. While he was away, she had a life-changing event at a Forty Hours Devotion, and she felt God calling her to religious life. Stunned, she decided to try it out and thought once it was out of her system, she would return home to Jack. After 75 years, it is still in her system.

These early experiences have colored where she often finds herself – "sitting with" those who are dying in her family and in the community. Her nieces and nephews say, "Say your act of contrition. Aunt Eny (Eileen) is coming." She has been present at the deaths of her siblings and with many IHMs.



In reflecting on the future, Eileen says, "I don't know what God has in mind for us – for me. God's work will continue to be done in ways that we can't imagine. We need to be open to hear that message and accept the new expression."

Eileen taught for a few years and then was told she would study nursing. For the next 24 years she was the compassionate presence in our IHM Infirmary.

She loved nursing. The nursing schedule was rigorous – 24/7 – so she rarely was able to attend community prayer. Her place of reflection was the Infirmary-Two balcony.

Her daily prayer is to surrender with grace to the changing needs of an aging body; to acknowledge that the mystery of death is indeed a part of life – which we at times find difficult, partly because of fear of the unknown and partly because we treasure the life God has given us: our beautiful Earth, loving companions and all the events that have shaped us.



# MARION DUGGAN

Marion was raised in Detroit. Her parents, John Duggan and Margaret Healy, met in Detroit after their arrival from Ireland; there were six children: Eileen, Dennis, Margaret, Jack, Marion and Sheila. Eileen died in a fire while her mother was pregnant with Marion, so those two sisters never met. Theirs was a fun family and religion was an important element of family life. Dad worked for Chrysler as a carpenter; Marion still puzzles about what type of job a carpenter filled at Chrysler, but he was a talented carpenter, not a mechanic.

Marion's vocation was fostered with her relationship with the sisters at Marygrove, where she worked after school at St. Gregory. She knew her vocation was God's will and she accepted it. Knowing the Marygrove connection, her parents had no real objection, although they were not excited about it.

Although she knew none of her postulant class before entry, she felt liked by leadership and already knew some of the sisters on the faculty because of her Marygrove work and felt comfortable talking to them. She was surprised by the restrictions on talking to professed sisters after her Marygrove experience, admitting that she didn't always keep that rule.

Marion's 25-year teaching ministry included several schools in Michigan, as well as St. Peter Claver, a school for Black students in Mobile, Ala. She taught all grades two-12 and enjoyed them all. Her years in the segregated south were especially formative, teaching her many lessons about the effects of segregation and poverty that influenced her later ministries.



As IHM Sisters moved into other ministries, Marion ministered at a program for the hardcore unemployed in Flint, then Flint Osteopathic Hospital and finally to Genesys Health Care Center, where she remained until she retired. During her ministry at Flint Osteopathic, she recognized the growing need for professional certification and began her evening commute to classes at Michigan

State University in Port Huron, graduating with an MSW while working full time. Somehow in all of this she managed to volunteer as a board member of Genesys hospice!

After retiring in 2001, Marion continued to volunteer with a ministry of presence and acceptance, this time at the Genesee County jail. During her time in Flint, she spent most weekends caring for her father. She also traveled many times with her father to the "auld sod," keeping contact with her many Irish relatives.



In 2005, Marion and Sister Dorothy Hemmert, OP, with whom she had lived for many years, decided to move to their respective Motherhouses.

This move was fortuitous, since Dorothy died suddenly and peacefully at Adrian just one month after the move.

Marion recognized God's hand and immersed herself in life within the Motherhouse community, especially in driving sisters on family visits and to medical appointments, putting her medical social work

experience to good use on their behalf. Her beautiful singing voice has complimented many congregational liturgies, while her teaching experience brought her to membership on the board of Monroe Catholic Central High School.



It was a beautiful Sunday morning in July when Sister Regina Fanning was born on the south side of Chicago. On Aug. 2, she was baptized “Nora Louise” by her uncle, Father Paul Nolan, at Our Lady of Peace Catholic Church.

Regina has said she would like to relive her childhood because her parents had made it such a glad time. She remembers her mom as patient and gentle; her dad as always happy with a great sense of humor. Both parents made each of their seven children feel special and often expressed pride in their accomplishments. After her dad’s death, a copy of the poem, “I’m the Daddy of a Nun,” which Regina had given him, was among his treasures.

Regina recalls one night seeing her parents on their knees by their bed saying their night prayers. This practice and many others were instilled in the Fanning children, teaching them to put God first, then the Church, family and friends.

The Fannings grew up on the south side of Chicago as members of St. Felicitas Parish. Regina recalls how much she enjoyed her years of education there by IHMs, who were great teachers and always so joyful! Regina and her sister imitated these happy nuns. Donning bathrobes, with bath towel “veils,” they would “teach” neighborhood youngsters on the back steps of their home.

Regina’s high school years brought thoughts of various vocations, but she realized God was calling her to give her life to God.

After graduating from Loretta Academy, she left for Monroe in August 1949 to join those joyful IHMs.



With deep gratitude for the wonderful IHM teacher training she received during her formation, Regina has devoted her life to the ministry of Catholic education. Her love of children made her a natural; most of her experience was teaching junior high, but she taught at every grade level.

After teaching many years in Michigan, she was delighted to return to her beloved Chicago, teaching at St. Felicitas, St. Rene and St. Domittila. While she and her good friend, Sister Dorothy Joyce, were teaching at St. Eulalia School, they moved to the IHM convent in Westchester.



In 2000, Regina’s 94-year-old mother came to live with them, bringing with her a lot of joy! However, by 2004, God had called her mom home, IHM High School in Westchester had closed and Regina and Dorothy moved to Oak Lawn, where they began a new ministry – volunteering. At Epiphany School, where Sister Elizabeth Pardo was principal, they served as substitute teachers. Today, Regina continues her ministry as a volunteer at the Motherhouse in a wide variety of services.

Now, celebrating 70 years as an IHM brings to her mind gratitude for the countless blessings she has received: opportunities for spiritual growth, fulfilling her dreams as an educator, sharing life with wonderful sister friends and the privilege of being able to care for her mom when needed.

We are privileged to be associated with this lovely, generous and kind sister, good friend and happy nun!



Joan is the oldest child of four born to Frank and Elizabeth (Galerneau). She was born in Michigan in 1930 but moved back and forth between Michigan and Minnesota until age 11, when her father got a permanent job with General Motors.



Joan's thirst for learning led her to graduate work in theology at Marquette University, during which time she also taught at Marygrove. Joan said, "I think the Marygrove students gave me more than I gave them. Such spirited young women!"

The family resided in Roseville; Joan first became acquainted with the IHMs in sixth grade at Sacred Heart. She continued her IHM education through high school at St. Mary, Mt. Clemens. "We knew they [the IHMs] really cared about us," she says. Joan fell in love with the whole group!

Her parents were not totally supportive of her decision to enter religious life. Mother Teresa McGivney suggested she attend Marygrove for a year in hopes that her parents would begin to accept her choice. They didn't change much by the end of that year, so in a painful departure, Joan left home in August 1949, driven to Monroe by relatives of one of the sisters. Her parents came to accept and take pride in her choice when it was obvious that she was happy and settled.

The day after her profession, Joan was sent to St. Raymond in Detroit, teaching 62 seventh graders! The discipline was a tremendous challenge but got easier the next year in sixth grade at St. Anne, Warren, then fifth grade at St. Francis de Sales. She found her niche when she arrived at Immaculata High School. She loved her time there and keeps in touch with many former students.

Joan did further post-graduate work in theology at Catholic University, which prepared her for her next ministry as director of religious education at St. Ephrem Parish in Sterling Heights. In 1985, her good friend, Dorothy McDaniel, IHM, was elected Provincial. Joan was elected as Assistant Provincial and secretary to the province. When Dorothy was elected IHM President 1988-1994, Joan was invited to serve as Dorothy's secretary and General Secretary for the congregation.



Their friendship shared many interests and commitments – feminism, love of animals, gardening – to the point of giving retreats on some of these topics. They

integrated new insights from feminist theology with new understandings from ecology, all of which deepened Joan's spirituality.

She moved to the Motherhouse in 2011 and began working in Archives, specializing in collecting oral histories from sisters. Joan and Dorothy would often be seen together feeding the stray cats they had befriended on the campus.

Although Dorothy is no longer able to join her, Joan – with the help of supporters – continues to watch over the cats, making sure they have shelter and food.



Joan says she would like to "be remembered as a person of peace, who always showed respect for all people and all species." She knows that

everything she has been given because of her life as an IHM has been pure GIFT.

Hi,

I'm Irene; born on a snowy, wintry day, Dec. 27, 1928, in our house in Detroit. I am the fifth of nine children of Helen Steintrager and Vincent Gumbleton. I had seven brothers and one sister, so I became involved in sports at a young age.

We all attended Epiphany Grade School, staffed by the IHM Sisters. Since my dad's three sisters were also IHMs, we were introduced to religious life at a very early age. I think my childhood was very normal – we prayed, played a lot, fought or argued at times and enjoyed life and family. Mom was the homemaker. In the summer, to keep me busy, she taught me to embroider dresser scarves; I still make her favorite recipes. During the Depression, dad provided for the family and attended night school to earn his college degree. Oftentimes in the summer, we spent our Sunday afternoons watching the Tigers play baseball at Briggs Stadium.

My vocation was influenced by my brothers who explored religious life (one of them later became a priest) and the sisters at Epiphany, Immaculata and Mercy College.

My first day on entering, I was in awe of everything and, probably, had not really realized what I was getting into. The most challenging thing for me was that I had to give up sports and therefore, the physical exercise that I had always enjoyed.

I have always enjoyed my mission life and the sisters with whom I lived. However, on Aug. 7, 1952, at the beginning of our yearly retreat, I might not have felt exactly that way when I received my first assignment.



When I turned my ticket over, I discovered I was being missioned to St. Boniface School, Detroit. The school was situated in an area that was then known as “skid row.” I confess, as being a native westside Detroiter, I was scared stiff. I don't think I slept one night during this eight-day retreat and I sure prayed a lot!

Aug. 17, my first day on mission, I arrived for morning prayers at 5:30 a.m. Within a few minutes, where was young Sister Irene but under the pew, out cold. WHAT A SURPRISE!!!! (We couldn't have coffee in those days.) The day went better after that though, as my brother Jerry and his new bride, Marian, came to visit.



While I enjoyed all of my missions, I am most grateful, for being able to serve the people of Corktown, Detroit, for 27 years as principal and teacher. During this period, we were one of the first to introduce a non-graded program, allowing students to learn at their level of competency. I appreciated my community's support to enable me to serve there.

The many opportunities offered to me by my community: yearly retreats, lectures, theology and liturgy, have assisted me in growing more deeply in God's Love. I have treasured my time in community and the many wonderful women who have been my mentors, sisters and friends.



# THERESE LEBLANC

I was born Sept. 11, 1930, my mother's birthday! My parents, Alice Henri and Joseph Oscar LeBlanc, were born in Canada – Ontario and Quebec respectively – then lived in Detroit. Our family was beautiful, religious and French-Canadian. We spoke French at home. When I was young, my father would sing, “Just Molly and me and Baby makes three ...” so I thought my mother's English name was Molly!

I was baptized at Most Holy Redeemer and attended grades one-seven; eighth grade at Gesu and high school at Immaculata, save for two years studying in Riguad, Quebec.

A memory that has undergirded my life happened in second grade. Sister Leontine, IHM, told us stories of her sister, who was a missionary and worked all over the world. Her work with poor children planted a desire for the missions and a love of little children deeply in my heart. Sister Leontine also prepared me for First Communion; I was so eager to receive Jesus.

At Immaculata, I was a forward on the basketball team. We were good! After graduation, four of the team said they were going to the IHM community. I thought, “No sense breaking up a good team!” I entered in September 1948.

My first mission was at St. Raymond, then to Ann Arbor, St. Thomas, and St. Joseph, Monroe – all first grade; then convent superior and school principal: not necessarily in ascending value.



In 1971, Margaret Brennan asked me to go to India to work with the poor and abandoned. A dream come true! Mary Lou Theisen and I went to work with Mother Teresa and her sisters, but it was a short stay because not even Mother Teresa was able to obtain visas for us; we returned to the states.

For the next four years, I worked in a poor area of Puerto Rico at a drug center with Vita Pierce; participated in the frantic “baby lift” with Nancy Ayotte in Vietnam; and then helped settle refugees in the United States at Fort Indiantown Gap, Pa., with

many others. In 1976, with a friend, Cherie Clark, I went back to India to set up a center to care for sick and abandoned infants. Indira Ghandi encouraged each couple to have only two children, so many female infants were just left on doorsteps. Again, visa problems arose. Cherri went to Washington, D.C., for help. I stayed only a short time, and then to the states again.

Returning, I lived at Kresge House of Prayer and got a job at Detroit Psychiatric Institute as chaplain/recipient rights advocate. Later, I was chaplain at Rehabilitation Institute of Michigan (RIM) for 15 years. After RIM, I came to the Motherhouse and new life continued.

Lastly, to each a heartfelt thank you for this wonderful celebration. It has brought so many memories back! I'm grateful the IHMs were, and are, such a good fit for me – even better than my basketball team! I thank all who have enabled me to mature in my relationship with myself, others and our God.



My parents, Agnes Graham and James McGinley grew up in Scotland. They had both a civil and a church ceremony when they got married then boarded a boat for America and joined my aunt and uncle in Detroit. They had three children: Jessie, and twins, Michael and Margaret; Michael died at 5 weeks. When Jessie was in kindergarten, we moved to the west side of Detroit. Gerry Demech, who became an IHM, grew up down the street from us and often came and played with us.



I was hired to teach eighth grade language arts while caring for my parents until their deaths. I am eternally grateful to the IHM community for allowing me to spend their last years with them.

While teaching at Tarpon Springs Middle School, the county recognized me as an outstanding teacher. I continued teaching until my retirement in 1994.

We attended Precious Blood Grade School, taught by Adrian Dominicans, and Immaculata High School, where we had IHMs. To me, the Dominicans were happy and carefree whereas the IHMs impressed me as being severe.

I entered the IHMs in late June 1949. My first mission was St. Patrick in Wyandotte where I began my teaching career with 64 first-graders. After teaching at St. Patrick, I continued in primary grades at Our Lady Queen of Hope and St. Mary Academy.



I was assigned to St. Mathew in Detroit, where I taught sixth grade, and then I taught high school religion, English and world history at Holy Redeemer; Port Huron Catholic; St. Martin; and Sacred Heart, Roseville.

When my parents moved to Florida, I requested, and was granted, permission to live with them so I could help take care of my mother, who had Alzheimer's disease. I chose to teach in the public school system; the IHM community benefited from the higher salary I received there. I had a job interview with the principal at Tarpon Springs Elementary School on Oct. 15, the feast of St. Teresa of Avila.



I enjoyed my time of retirement by attending daily liturgy and by playing tennis. I returned to Monroe in 2000. Sister Mary Ann Karle invited me to join her and Sister James Marian Sarchet and Sister Mary Ellen Ginty to live at the Godfroy House, since the Motherhouse was going through renovation

In 2003, when the renovation was complete, I returned to live at the Motherhouse where I was assistant sacristan and drove for the Motherhouse sisters. While making many retreats, I often wrote poetry and eventually I put my poems into a booklet.

I realized that my memory was not always sharp and in May 2006, I asked to be placed in the Memory Care Unit. I continued to assist in cleaning the birdcage and the aquarium, sewing nametags on sisters' clothing, singing in the Motherhouse choir and helping prepare daily prayers.

I wrote the poem, "More Time for God." It says, in part, "I am ready to let go/ And now let be with grace's flow. I know You will help me, God."

**“Human salvation lies  
in the hands of the  
creatively maladjusted.”**

Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.,  
*Strength to Love*

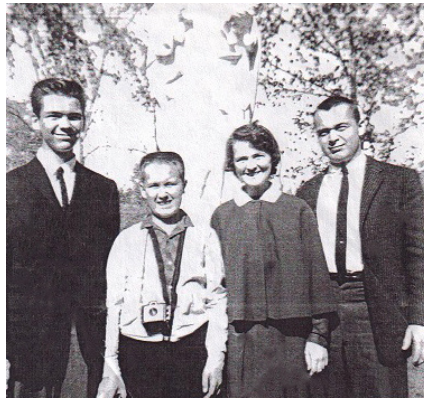
Barbara was born in Detroit, the eldest and only daughter among four children. Her dad moved to Detroit from Indiana to work in a factory. Her Irish mom was born in Canada.

Barb always wanted a sister. Which had a surprising fulfillment! After 13 years of Detroit Public Schools, however, Barbara, in her own words “showed virtually no promise of becoming a nun!” Her parents’ divorce caused her to rethink her future. A year at Marygrove College concretized her call—to sisterhood, community, spirituality and service.

She entered the IHMs in 1959. After years of formation, she was eager for an urban classroom—such as St. Cecilia in Detroit. Her first assignments, however, were to suburban schools—St. Regis and St. Hugo! With open placement, she opted for the more diverse Pontiac High School.

The Active Spirituality for a Global Community program opened up her desire for a social justice focus within the wider community. Barb chose to work at Lansing Catholic High School, combining teaching and coordinating a student community service program. For three summers she directed the diocese migrant program.

The next phase of the journey was St. Rita in Detroit working with parish Worship and Education committees. Simultaneously, she helped found Pax Christi Detroit and the Detroit Peace Community.



Barbara felt that her role was to be a bridge between frontline activists and the public. But again the universe presented another surprise—she felt the call to pray, uninvited, at a Southfield site where there was promise of arrests. On the 37<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the bombing of Hiroshima (Aug. 6, 1982), God’s grace and an ecumenical faith community got her through experiences of

arrest, jail and courtrooms. This action contributed to the loss of her parish work. She worked briefly as an anti-nuclear canvasser then for the next 10 years as director of Friends Indeed in Ypsilanti, assisting low-wealth people. She helped found two peace communities (Ann Arbor and Ypsilanti).



Wanting to focus more on advocacy, she was hired at Groundwork for a Just World in Detroit, addressing peace and human rights. Highlights of 10 years there include joining Dignity Detroit, two delegations to Palestine and coordinating a state-wide process addressing state welfare reform in the mid-’90s.

After a sabbatical, Barb began a dual role at Marygrove College: Social Justice adjunct faculty and campus minister. She remained at Marygrove through 2019. Barb continues her ministry with the IHM Justice, Peace and Sustainability Office, primarily collaborating with coalitions for racial justice and ecological sustainability. She participated in the Poor People’s Campaign in 2018, challenging corporate and the city’s priorities. She was part of a group which had a (hung) jury trial.

Barb leads a “creatively maladjusted” life. She is grateful to the IHM community for many rich relationships and opportunities, for our diverse faith-centered paths, for support as her path evolves, and for its alternative economic system and values.



As I celebrate 60 years in this 175<sup>th</sup> year of IHM, I look back to move forward, reflecting on:

### *The Early Years*

I grew up in Dearborn, Mich., the eldest child of Madelyn and Frederick Cooney. There were seven, and I sometimes assumed a parenting role with the younger siblings. Twelve years' education in the Dearborn Public Schools, followed by a year at Wayne State provided an excellent foundation for lifelong learning.

As practicing Catholics, our family attended Sunday Mass and weekly religious education classes at Sacred Heart. There, I met the IHM Sisters and became aware of a call to IHM. The family was aware of my grandfather's sister, M. Paula Cooney, IHM; however, she was not really a part of our lives. She is the reason I asked for and was given the name, Marie Paula.

### *Ministry in Community*

Teaching grades six-10 at a time when many schools found it necessary to close, I was gifted with an invitation to 14 years in parish ministry. The invitation to Visitation and ministry at the Barn opened me into a depth of spirituality, community and ministry. Provincial leadership provided an opportunity to shape the end of provinces and move to a new form of leadership. Here, elders gifted my life and drew me to gerontology and professional work with older adults. Congregational leadership during the renovation of the Motherhouse was an avenue to share my gifts with the broader community. While engaging with others to shape the future of this iconic building, I was gifted by all who participated in the project.

The call to California and administration of Regina Residence brought together my gifts of leadership, love of elders and commitment to developing person-centered care in religious life and beyond.



My current ministry as Commissary of the Servants of Jesus, where I serve as canonical leader for 11 women coming to closure of their 45-year history as a diocesan community, weaves all the threads of my ministerial life together.

### *Spirituality Then and Now*

In formation and the early years, my spirituality was much about "Jesus and me." Scripture was important. I came to love the liturgy through our exposure to it during formation. However, I was led to the Documents of Vatican II and books such as Schillebeeckx, *In the Redeeming Christ*, which opened the door to experiencing God in ways I had not learned but that resonated within me.

Since then, meeting people and ideas through books and conversations, I have come to know the Universe Story, the connectedness of all; God present in nature, in mountains, in dogs.



### *Forward from Here*

I look to the future with hope for myself, for our IHM community, for our Church and our world.

May we continue to know and to trust:

- That life is a series of invitations to Come and See.
- Nothing is ever by chance.
- There are still ministries to explore.
- There are new ways of knowing God, being church, living community.
- Our lives are transformed by all that touches us.



# DIANN COUSINO

Diann Theresa Cousino was born on Nov. 12, 1941. She was the oldest of 10 children of Bernard A. Cousino and Beatrice Barton. Their first home was in the village of South Rockwood.

Her ancestral families, French settlers, embraced the values of their Catholic faith and education.

Diann's early childhood was spent on the farm, learning skills from her mother and grandmother to create a home with family and friends, sewing, canning, cooking and growing vegetables. She was quilting by age 10 and playing piano recitals with her sister, Barbara.

She faced a cultural shock in the summer of 1953 when the family moved to Dearborn. Although everything was unfamiliar for a while, the move gained them a larger home, a better job for her father and exposure to IHM teachers.

While a senior in high school, she was approached by Sister Alice Mary Diehl who asked her if she ever thought about becoming a sister.

After prayer, conversations and discernment, Diann knew she wanted to become an IHM. She entered the IHM community on Sept. 6, 1959.



Although teaching was not the primary draw to joining the IHMs, she realized that she had a natural ability to teach because she was the oldest of 10 children who became her students. Her assignment at St. Francis de Sales School, Detroit, as a first-grade teacher felt comfortable, like she was “falling into a groove.”

One of her favorite teaching mission was Gesu School, Detroit, where nothing but the best could be had for the students. Diann also was involved in Talent's Unlimited, the Ungraded Primary, the Workshop Way, the British Primary and the pilot program for SWRL (an art program). Diann continued her own education, earning two master's degrees—in special education and administration.



In 2006, she began a new position of IHM Archive assistant. In this position, she is able to pursue research into IHM history. In doing research on her family genealogy, Diann has found 45 women who are IHM-Cousino relatives!

Diann is very grateful for her presence in the IHM community, where her faith, rooted in Jesus and the Gospels, continues to deepen.

Diann says, “It is a blessing to be an IHM Sister. I am proud to be a member of a group of women who have embraced the liberating mission of Jesus. I pray that it may always be so.”



Margaret (Peggy) Devaney, IHM, “Sistá,” to most whom she has served for the past 40 years in her Oakland County Jail and Outreach Ministry, is truly a woman who “Irish step-danced” from the Detroit Gaelic League.

Her “call” to the IHM congregation as a young teen grew out of the loving support of her Irish immigrant parents, especially her mother. Peggy’s dad, a bus driver, was tragically killed in a pedestrian accident leaving mom, a practical nurse, to raise John, Michael and young daughter, Peggy.

Peggy’s academic degree preparations (bachelor’s and master’s degrees in education and a Master of Divinity degree in theology) and lifelong service are undergirded by her guiding mantra: “God leads us where we did not plan to go.” As expressed in the IHM Constitutions: “We hear the cry of all God’s people, especially of the poor and abandoned.”

Peggy began her ministry as a teacher – at Epiphany (Detroit), St. Michael (Flint) and Nativity (Hollywood, Fla.). She served in parishes in Michigan and Florida as a pastoral minister and in religious education, before embarking on the jail and outreach ministry.

Local, national and international honors and recognitions throughout Peggy’s ministry acknowledge her dedication, compassion, leadership and volunteerism. The expression that earned these awards is Peggy’s day-to-day “holding the hands and hearts” of the disenfranchised, the recovering addicts, the recently incarcerated and the victims of crime.



She was unanimously selected to receive the 2020 Volunteer of the Year Award from the American Jail Association (AJA) – a national award – and was chosen from among 50 nominees!

In her nomination package, spearheaded by Lieutenant Jennifer Miles of Oakland County Jail, Peggy’s achievements over nearly 40 years of jail ministry were cited.

The package also included a letter of recognition presented to her by Major Charles Snarey, commending her for her “ability to encourage and bring together different faith groups from the community as well as managing hundreds of volunteers serving within the jail.” It also states that she is “a relied upon source of knowledge regarding issues involving religious rights for inmates” and has “the respect of Sheriff’s Office Command and jail personnel.”



She trains hundreds of interfaith jail volunteers, directs an outreach/distribution center she founded and daily counsels the many who search for hope and healing. In addition, as a gracious caregiver, Peggy lived with and prayed with many people through their final journey.

Peggy’s 60-year ministry, even today, partners in an “Irish step-dance” with those people who search for her smiling and compassionate guidance and care.



# RITA FISHER

Rita has a rich ethnic background: her grandmother, mother and uncle were from Czechoslovakia. Her father left the family farm in the northern tip of Michigan's thumb and moved to Detroit. Rita was born Oct. 22, 1936; she enjoyed being a bit spoiled by her older siblings, Alvin and Shirley.

After just a few days in kindergarten, Rita wanted to move on – all they did was play! She wanted to be in the same school as Alvin and Shirley, so she attended St. Vincent de Paul in Detroit for 12 years, then Marygrove and then taught third grade at St. Boniface.

Here, the principal, Sister Mary Zachary, said to her, "Rita, when are you going to stop fooling around and come to the convent?"

This question surfaced the nagging feeling that had been part of Rita's life for years. She considered a cloistered community; she enjoyed quiet and being alone. However, she realized a cloistered community would not be a good fit. She knew the IHMs and her path took her to Monroe, where she appreciated the strict rules and the separation from all she left behind.

Formation was not a walk in the park. However, Sister Marie Elise, the directress, planted a seed in Rita – her love of liturgy. It was common then to avoid "particular friendships," and she took that to mean that one should not have friends and didn't foster relationships. Her focus was on nurturing her relationship with Jesus.



As a novice, Rita taught eighth grade at the Academy and at Hall of the Divine Child before final vows. While teaching at Holy Redeemer and St. Thomas Aquinas in Detroit, she was also taking liturgy courses at the Archdiocesan Office of Liturgy. As a result of others' encouragement, she attended Notre Dame and earned a master's degree in liturgical studies.

She then went to the Diocese of Columbus, Ohio, Office of Liturgy, where she remained for 11 years; she loved teaching others the riches of the Sacred Liturgy. Rita also served on the Diocesan Liturgical Commission and was active in various capacities.

When she left the diocese, her ministry path took her to some interesting places, such as Safelight Auto Glass and the data center at Ohio State University before returning to Michigan. In Monroe, Rita found a home in LARC, the Motherhouse bookstore, and became involved in liturgy in different ways.



Rita "goes with the flow," striving to be a joyful presence in the lives of those she encounters. If she felt that she gave things up to join the congregation, she realizes that she found much more as

an IHM for 60 years. She is grateful to all the women who have gone before her; the leadership who supported her and encouraged her; and the God who has walked with her, who has been, is and will be with us as a congregation.



She offers wisdom to someone discerning religious life: "If you think God is calling you, prepare to say yes to a world you never imagined!"

Marjorie Polys was the ninth of 12 children born to John and Charlesetta Polys in Kirkwood, Mo.; the IHM Sisters opened St. Gerard Majella School there in the mid-1950s. Marge's three younger brothers attended that school while Marge attended St. Peter School and Coyle High School. She recalled stopping in to meet the IHM Sisters and being drawn to their "relational hospitality, availability and care for the whole person." Marge had a healthy social life in high school, worked for a year afterward and admits to "resisting" the call to religious life.

Mary's "Yes" to the unknown came to her poignantly at a prayer service and the echo of St. Alphonsus Ligouri's, "Grant that I may love you always, then do with me as you wish," stirred Marge to action. In 1959, she boarded a train and headed to Monroe, where she entered the IHM congregation. Her mother had a hard time accepting her decision to enter religious life, go such a distance and to be away from family; she thought that would be the last she would see her daughter. Her father, however, saw things differently and made the visit to Monroe with her mom more than once!

Wearing the hat of "teacher," she ministered at St. Frederick in Pontiac and St. Timothy in Trenton before becoming the principal of St. Gerard Majella Elementary School back in Kirkwood. Another change of hats and Marge began working with teens, young adults and adults in spirituality, worship and pastoral counseling at St. Joseph Parish, Monroe; Blessed Sacrament Catholic Church in Burlington, N.C.; and campus ministry at Elon College, in N.C. Marge was asked by the IHM congregation to serve as "corporate officer and community leader" and served in provincial leadership; as coordinator of human resources; and as coordinator of ministries, traveling from coast to coast.



Travel was mostly in a van, which was made into a little house, and she camped along the way. This "opened my eyes to the absolute beauty and diversity of the country and people's different life experiences."

Marge earned postgraduate degrees from Wayne State University, Creighton University and Simmons Graduate School of Social Work. She did internships in clinical social work at Quincy Mental Health Day Hospital and then at Geiger Community Health Center, both in Massachusetts. She then ministered as a clinical social worker in Raleigh, N.C.



Marge returned to Michigan in 2006, where she continued to serve as clinical social worker in the Center for Individual and Family Services and then in private practice.

She was again asked by the IHM community to become director of Novices, accompanying our most recent first-professed sisters through novitiate and also participating in the Intercongregational Formation Program in Villa Maria, Pa.

In 2019, Marge returned to North Carolina, where she serves as a spiritual director, a ministry she describes as "listening, discernment and prayer in a confidential setting of encouragement and compassion."

Marge has loved every ministry as an opportunity for growth. What has been her greatest joy since joining the community?

RELATIONSHIPS!



# KATHY GROSH

Kathy Grosh, IHM, grew up in Strongsville, Ohio, the youngest of the family's four "big kids" and the oldest of the five "little kids." She attended St. Joseph Grade School and St. Joseph Academy in Cleveland. She had fun organizing plays and helping create a family club called "The United Nincompoops of Acirema" (America spelled backwards). During club meetings, she was in charge of refreshments and entertainment!

Kathy enjoyed helping plant the garden with her dad. Her mom was the heart of the family – a woman of great faith who gathered the family to pray the rosary and for other faith activities. Her oldest sister, Susan, entered a Franciscan community in Chicago and died there of Hodgkin's disease at the age of 21 – a traumatic time for Kathy and her family. She also was deeply affected when her younger brother, Rick, died tragically. She now enjoys gatherings with her six siblings and many nieces, nephews and their families.

After high school, Kathy worked in a business office in Cleveland before becoming a Vista volunteer in a poor community near Little Rock, Ark. This contributed to her desire to dedicate herself to work among the poor. When a friend told her about the IHM Sisters' work, she was interested. She went to Monroe to visit and talked with sisters about their work. She was struck hearing from one sister about her ministry in Brazil; this led to her decision to join the IHM community.



She entered September 1969 and met Martha Rabaut, IHM, who was her postulant and Novice director and became her lifelong spiritual director and friend. Kathy entered with six others. Within a few years, however, five classmates had left the community. Her remaining classmate and dear friend, Terry Burkley, died before professing final vows. As a

result, Kathy was a class of one.

Her first IHM ministry was as pastoral associate at Ascension Parish in Warren, Mich. She earned a master's degree in theological studies from Catholic Theological Union in Chicago, and her next ministry took her back to Michigan. She worked for 10 years at the Catholic Community Center in Benton Harbor, which provided emergency services and supportive counseling. It touched her commitment to being present with the poor and the value of deep, compassionate listening, which led to continuing her studies at the Center for Humanistic Studies and become a licensed psychologist.



Kathy has been a practicing psychologist for 27 years, ministering in Detroit and Monroe. She is currently at Humanistic Wellness Center in Monroe, providing therapy for children, adults and families and loves her work, feeling blessed to share deeply in the lives of many people.

Kathy is most grateful for the wonderful relationships within the IHM community that have deepened her faith and enriched her life. She appreciated the opportunity to minister with individuals and within the larger Earth community. Her IHM life is a source of joy and blessing to her and she strives to be a source of joy and blessings to others.







**Deep Faith. Courageous Spirit. Action for Justice.**

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