

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

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

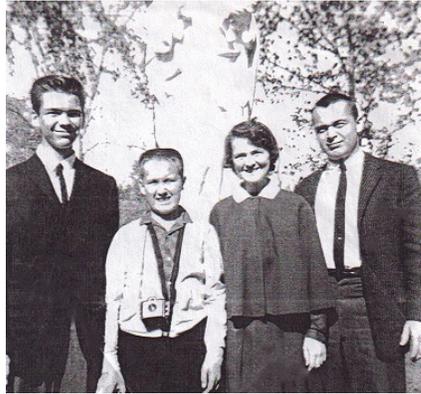
Barbara was born in Detroit, the eldest and only daughter among four children. Her dad moved to Detroit from Indiana to work in a factory. Her Irish mom was born in Canada.

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 37th 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.

