

**Remembering Dorothy (John Ellen) Nauer, IHM**  
**April 12, 1927 – Feb. 17, 2021**



Nellie Irene (Crum) and John Sebastian Nauer were married on Oct. 26, 1920, at St. Mary Church in the small southern Ohio town of Fulda. Like all post-war families of those years, they moved to cities where industry was developing. The Nauer family settled in Akron, Ohio.

Nellie and John were blessed with five boys and three girls. Dorothy Mae, their fourth child, was born April 12, 1927. She was baptized at St. Mary in Akron, their home parish.

John was a good worker and applied for a job at Firestone Tire Company where he worked for more than 10 years. The family had a car; but on most days John walked three miles in the morning and then back home, in the evening. Nellie was a homemaker and had her hands full caring for her children.

The family home was a happy one where the children learned their prayers and how to love and respect one another. One prayer that was a must was “Grace” before and after meals. If you ever had the opportunity to share a meal with the Nauers, you know that even Eddie would remind you to pray the “Grace.” Sunday evenings were always a fun time. John’s relatives lived nearby and frequently joined the family when John played the violin and they all sang.

The family were members of St. Mary Church, a parish complete with both an elementary and secondary school staffed by the IHM Sisters. Since the Baker family lived in the same area, Dorothy and Millie walked to school together those many years. During the summer months, especially in the high school years, they spent a lot of time at each other’s houses. Both graduated together on June 10, 1945. It was then their paths parted as Dorothy chose to leave for Monroe at the end of June. Separation from her family was difficult for Dorothy and she had many lonesome days during the postulate. She was received into the novitiate on Jan. 2, 1946, and given the name John Ellen.

After making first vows in 1948, she was sent to St. Raymond on mission immediately. Dorothy was a strong, talented and successful elementary teacher. For the next 20 years, she taught all over Michigan: Detroit, Benton Harbor, Jackson, Newport, Monroe and Trenton, where she was both a teacher and later became principal, and after the school closed, she served as pastoral minister.

In 1974, she entered the Clinical Pastoral Education Program at the University of Michigan. After securing her certification, she ministered at Hutzel Hospital for seven

years. In 1982, she was called to serve as the administrator of our Motherhouse Infirmary and as a councilor on the Motherhouse Team.

Leaving Monroe in 1997 after many full years of ministry, Dorothy volunteered in the GEM Program at Holy Redeemer. Of this ministry she wrote "all have been growing and stretching experiences for me!"

In 2011 Dorothy moved to the Motherhouse and gave expression to her gratitude for the time she had for prayer, as well as the many opportunities to be of service in other areas – Archives, Amazon book sales, The OP Shop, distributing mail and visiting our sisters in health care and taking them for walks as health or weather permitted.

Dorothy's personal entry for our IHM Book of Life includes a quote from Isaiah 41, a section she found personally strengthening. She writes, "Christ, although not perceptible to my senses as I advance from moment to moment, is my constant Companion in my journey of life." Dorothy's faith in God's loving presence strengthened her as our sister and friend.

When Dorothy was called to a very special place in our home, McGivney Way, she was able to enjoy and participate in all the activities as well as continue to use her pastoral care skills in welcoming or consoling others. I am sure she would want the nurses, nursing assistants and staff thanked over and over for the kindness they showed in caring for her.

We have seen a sampling of letters written over the years from former students and co-ministers that confirms what we have experienced: Dorothy's patience, kindness and deep empathy have endeared her to many. We pray now, as she joins her family and all our Sisters who have gone before her, that she enjoys all that God has prepared for her. Rest in peace, dear friend.

Composed by Sister Mildred Baker, IHM, and Sister Margaret Babcock, IHM  
Delivered by Sister Margaret Babcock, IHM, Feb. 24, 2021