

You have to trust God.

Sister Angela was born and raised in Lima, Peru, along with her six siblings. She met the IHM Sisters when she came to Michigan to study as part of her formation as a member of a Peruvian community.

She had felt a calling to religious life when she was a child acting as a companion for the sisters in Lima. She was drawn to the work she observed the sisters performing. "I saw how they talked to the poor and how they gave them hope," she says. She became a member of the Peruvian community of the Sisters Missionaries of the Infant of Prague.

Sister Angela came to the United States through the Sister Formation Program and was sent to the IHM Sisters in Monroe to study. After four years of studying at the Marygrove Campus in Monroe, she returned to Lima and worked for her religious community, teaching primary school and then becoming principal.

After a tragic earthquake, the IHM Sisters invited Sister Angela to return to Michigan. She saw the exciting changes incurred by Vatican II, especially the freedom to minister. She returned to Peru and after a few years, she transferred to the IHM community; she enjoyed being "immersed with the people and their lives." Sister Angela's first ministry as an IHM was tutoring at St. Vincent School in Detroit.



Approximately 85% of the students were Mexican or Puerto Rican. To learn more about the Mexican culture, she studied at the Mexican and American Cultural Center in San Antonio, later assisting American nuns and priests who came to the center to study.

She then worked in the Hispanic Office for the Archdiocese of Detroit, expanding services to Hispanic parishes. During that time, she went to Madrid to the Pastoral Superior Institute of the Pontifical University of Salamanca and earned a diploma in applied pastoral.

After 13 years with the Hispanic Office, she ministered as assistant director in the Vocations Office of the Archdioceses of Detroit. Sister Angela became familiar with all the religious communities in the area so she could best direct young women and men; she retired after 15 years.

In "retirement," she ministered part time at St. Anne Parish in Detroit, teaching adult religious education and baptism and confirmation preparation. After three years, she returned to Lima to assist a vocation team of IHM Sisters from Scranton, Pa. Currently, she is assisting at Visitation Spirituality Center, a ministry of the IHM Sisters.



Sister Angela has enjoyed sharing in the joy the sisters have in their ministries and being pushed to reach her potential. "There is something very special. They help you," she observes. She relies on God to give her pushes to get through difficult times. She appreciates the unity within the community and she is grateful for everything the IHM Sisters have given her, including the opportunity to travel to further her education. Through prayer, she has felt confident in going wherever she needed to go.



Angela Cerna-Plata