

Obituary



Sister Ruth Glaser, IHM, died Thursday, Nov. 16, 2017, in the IHM Health Care Center, Monroe at the age of 92.

Sister Ruth was one of seven children born to Joseph and Myrtle (Lathrop) Glaser of Detroit. She was born on November 20, 1924, and baptized Ruth Florence in St. Aloysius Church. The children attended Holy Redeemer Grade School. Ruth attended Girls' Catholic Central High School and graduated from Immaculata High School, Detroit, in 1942. That summer she entered the Sisters, Servants

of the Immaculate Heart of Mary, Monroe, and received the religious name, Sister Helen Ann.

Sister Ruth, as she was known, earned a bachelor's degree from Marygrove College and a master's degree from the University of Detroit. She began her teaching ministry at St. John, Monroe; and taught at the Michigan schools of Holy Name, Birmingham; St. Michael, Flint; St. Matthew, All Saints, St. Agnes, Gesu, Mother of Our Savior and Immaculata High School, Detroit; for a ministry lasting 25-plus years.

In the late 1960s, she returned to study at Wayne State University and entered into a new specialty of clinical pastoral care, chaplaincy and hospital ministry with the Archdiocese of Detroit and for 15 years at Harper Hospital and Rehabilitation Institute, Detroit. After a year of renewal at St. Regis College, Toronto, Sister Ruth served as a chaplain and director of Pastoral Care at Bon Secours Hospital in Grosse Pointe.

She left this position to serve the congregation as assistant provincial of the Northeast Province. In 1990, Sister Ruth moved to Monroe and continued to serve her community in Pastoral Care for the Motherhouse and Health Care Center. Officially retiring in 1997, she continued to volunteer for the community, assisting as needed in Pastoral Care and in Archives. She moved to the Motherhouse in 2004.

Remembering

Ruth was born on Nov. 20, 1924. Her parents, Joseph and Myrtle Glaser, anxiously awaited the arrival of their sixth child. Ruth had two older brothers, Joe and Jack, and three older sisters, Mary Elizabeth, Helen and Nancy. Brother, Bob would join the family a couple years later. The family was only completed when her father brought home from Manresa a St. Bernard puppy, named Pat, who became Ruth's special pet.

Both parents had strong religious values and deep faith. Joseph was very active in the St. Vincent de Paul Society, CYO and various religious organizations. Because of his leadership qualities, he was selected by Cardinal Mooney to be one of the groups to accompany him to Rome for his ordination as a cardinal. Also, Dad attended daily Mass whenever possible. Myrtle, a convert to Catholicism, had a deep devotion to the Blessed Mother, the Rosary and Mother of Perpetual Devotions. There was never a doubt in my mind that my home fostered my vocation and gave me a deep love of prayer.

The family was active members of Holy Redeemer Parish and the children all attended Holy Redeemer School. Ruth completed only eighth grade at Holy Redeemer and then the family moved, so high school was begun at Girls' Catholic Central.

However, in 1941 when Immaculata High School opened, Ruth transferred and graduated from there. She spent all her school years in schools staffed by IHM Sisters, where she was greatly influenced by their life and teaching, so it was no surprise that she entered the congregation after graduation in 1942.

Ruth began her teaching ministry in 1945 right here in Monroe at St. John. In the next 30-some years, she taught in grade schools in Detroit, Flint and Birmingham.

In 1962 she received a master's degree in guidance and counseling, and for the next eight years she worked with high school students. When the opportunity for sisters to become hospital chaplains arose, Ruth entered the Clinical Pastoral Education Program at Harper Hospital in Detroit. Because of her experience and degree in guidance and counseling, the Archdiocese of Detroit hired her as a Catholic chaplain. For the next 18 years, patients and staff in hospitals and rehabilitation institutes benefited from Ruth's calm presence and loving care.

She was free and able to exemplify the creative love, goodness and compassion of God to all she met. Her own quote to her team workers: "We bring Christ to people at a point in their life when they need religious support and encouragement."

In 1988, Ruth was called to serve in leadership in the Northeast Province. She was ready and willing to respond to this responsibility and her training and experience in guidance and counseling was a great asset. She was greatly respected by the sisters.

In 1990, Ruth moved to Monroe and was asked to help in the Pastoral Care department in our Health Care Center. Besides being well-qualified for this ministry, she knew or had lived with many of the sisters and they loved and respected her.

In 2003, as her health began to fail, she moved into the Motherhouse. This was a very difficult adjustment for her since she and Mary Ann had lived together, shared prayer and family concerns for 30 years. It took some time to adjust from living with just one person to the large Motherhouse group. She loved the work in Pastoral Care and continued to serve in that department.

Among her favorite authors, Anthony de Mello, SJ, rates very high. His style attracted her, as did Henri Nouwen's and Ronald Rolheiser's. It seems she couldn't get enough of their works. Also Bishop Ken Untener's Little Books have had an influence on her – his message to try to continually remember God's presence in our lives and in others.

Ruth expressed gratitude for the many blessings she experienced living at the Motherhouse – more time for prayer, special retreats, educational programs, Chapel concerts, availability of doctors and health care professionals, all our staff members, as well as all our sisters she has known and lived with over the years. We thank you Ruth for your life with us and for the many ways you have enriched our lives. We rejoice with you now as you join your family, friends and all our sisters who have gone before you praising the God you loved and served so well.

Written and delivered by Margaret Babcock, IHM
Nov. 21, 2017