

## Remembering



Sister Harriet Singelyn, IHM, 86, died of natural causes Friday, April 3, at the IHM Senior Living Community in Monroe.

Harriet Anne Singelyn was born on April 29, 1933, to Edward and Julia (Kling) Singelyn in New Baltimore, Mich. Harriet attended grade school at several schools and later attended Blessed Sacrament, Detroit, from which she graduated high school. She entered the Sisters, Servants of the Immaculate Heart of Mary on Aug. 16, 1950, receiving the religious name of Sister James Edward. She earned a bachelor's degree from Marygrove College, Detroit, and later earned an MBA degree from Notre Dame University, Notre Dame, Ind.

Sister Harriet's ministry began as a teacher at Gesu and Annunciation Schools, Detroit; Holy Name, Birmingham; St. John, Monroe; and Sacred Heart, Roseville; and later at St. Mary Catholic Central (SMCC), Monroe, where she also served as accountant. In 1965, she was assigned to the IHM Motherhouse in Monroe where her accounting and financial background benefitted the congregation through her work in the Bursar's Office, Treasurer's Office, as Assistant Treasurer and General Treasurer. She continued this work for the next 24 years, until enjoying a year of renewal, then teaching at SMCC in Monroe.

In 1991 Sister Harriet began a three-year ministry as financial manager at Springbank Christian Center, Kingstree, S.C., before returning to Monroe. From 1994 to 2012 she served the congregation as administrative assistant to the Chief Financial Officer and Treasurer. For many years, she was the accountant for SSIHM Charitable Trust, retiring in 2013.

Sister Harriet delighted in music as a hobby and most of all enjoyed singing, teaching singing or experimenting with a glee club with students of all ages. She wrote that her years at Springbank "were full of awakening to God's presence in creation, using gifts that were not yet tapped: ... and art as meditation ..." A talented artist and potter, she experienced basketry and watercolor painting as especially meditative activities.

In 2015 Sister Harriet moved to IHM Senior Living Community. She volunteered in the community's Service Office and continued to share her financial expertise and guidance.

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Harriet was born April 29, 1933, the fourth child of Julia Agnes (Kling) and August "Gus" Edward Singelyn. Julia was a teacher and Edward an insurance salesman. Harriet's siblings, now deceased, were Edward, Mary (Endres), William who died of scarlet fever, and James. Rev. Robert (Bob) Singelyn, the youngest of the six, is now the patriarch of this generation.

Harriet attended St. Hugo of the Hills grade school in her very early years and transferred to Blessed Sacrament Grade and High Schools when the family moved to the Detroit area. She entered the congregation after graduation on Aug. 19, 1950, professed her first vows on Aug. 15, 1953, and final vows in 1958. Harriet graduated from Marygrove College, earning a Bachelor of Arts degree in mathematics on June 2, 1954, and then earning a Master of Arts in business administration from the University of Notre Dame on Aug. 6, 1965. The Notre Dame program spanned four summer sessions, 1962 through 1965.

Harriet's formal teaching ministry spanned 11 years from 1954/55 through 1964/65. She taught grades five through 12 at Gesu and Annunciation, Detroit; Holy Name, Birmingham; St. John, Monroe; and Sacred Heart, Roseville. Her business and financial administration ministry tallied to a remarkable 48 years. It began in August 1965 under Sister Ludwina Schulte in the "Bursar's Office," which became the "Treasurer's Office" under Sister Margaret Brennan's administration, with Sister Jane (Marmion) Johnson initially as treasurer. Harriet became the assistant treasurer around 1973, and then became general treasurer (1976-1988) under succeeding administrations. During 1988-1991, she served as the assistant general treasurer, had a year of renewal in Monroe, and served as a teacher and accountant at St. Mary Catholic Central High School (Monroe). From 1991 to 1994, Harriet served at Spring Bank in Kingstree, S.C., as finance manager and staff member. From 1994 through 2012, she served as the staff assistant to the SSIHM treasurer. A diminished schedule occurred only as Harriet served as the accountant for the SSIHM Charitable Trust during 2012-2014. Harriet served as the Charitable Trust's accountant since the Trust's origin in June 1988, but in conjunction with other full-time responsibilities.

While in the first grade at St. Hugo, an incident occurred that was probably a harbinger of Harriet's strong and enduring sense of fairness, keen analysis, decisiveness and action. While waiting in line at the drinking fountain, Lucille Bugtinar tried to cut in line ahead of Harriet. Harriet grabbed Lucille by the hair, pulled her away and told her to get to the end of the line like everyone else! The school called Harriet's mother, Julia, to report the incident. Julia asked if indeed, Lucille was really trying to cut in, and then just kind of laughed and said that the incident was "social justice in the making."

Harriet's generous and responsive nature was particularly evident in meeting the demands of serving in the business office of the congregation. Service was, and is, a 12-month commitment, as there are no summer months off, always bills that need to be processed and paid, members' needs and questions that must be responded to and financial monitoring, management and decisions that are constant. Harriet brought her educational preparedness, personal gifts and skills to the responsibilities and tasks that require careful coordination and great personal collaboration. Harriet was instrumental in moving the office into a mechanized and later, a computerized, system of bookkeeping, accounting and

reporting. Such transitions enabled enhanced financial planning by leadership and broader sharing of information with congregational members. Though her name was rarely mentioned, Harriet's insights and artistry resulted in better and clearer reports, policies, procedures and explanations to IHM members, administrators and consultants. Do you remember the announcement establishing the initial retirement fund by leadership, and the illustration of the rocking chair in the material? That was Harriet's analysis and art! And preparing for entry into the federal system for Social Security? The analysis, planning, gathering of information, and delivery of stack of Federal reports to the Internal Revenue Service office in Covington, Ky., had Harriet's fingerprints all over it!

Through these, and many other tasks, paths and years, Harriet's kindness, persistence, gentleness and smile prevailed in her life's journey and our interactions with her. This excerpt from Harriet's page in the "Book of Life" best captures her spirit.

Perhaps the clearest of all messages to journey in a different direction came near the close of my two-month sabbatical program at Springbank. We had been reflecting on a passage from the 29th chapter of Jeremiah. The next morning, I opened my bible, attempting to find that section without knowing the chapter number or verses. The words in Jeremiah 29: 11-14 jumped from the page: "I will call you back to this place ... and your future will be full of hope." So, I responded positively to the invitation to join the Springbank staff and spent over three years in a completely new ministry. These years were full of awakening to God's presence in creation, using gifts that had not yet been tapped: prayer ministry, journeying with others, and art as meditation, especially through basketry and watercolor painting.

So now, we rejoice with you, Harriet, for you have completed your journey upon this earth ... you have crossed over the threshold into the realm of unending love ... and we await the experience of your welcoming us with your ever loving spirit and joy!

Written by Frances Mlocek, IHM