

Jean Ann Gorman

“God has a way of saying, ‘you belong here, and I want you here.’”

Sister Jean Ann Gorman had known she wanted to be a nun since third or fourth grade. “I think I prayed every day to the Blessed Mother that the Lord would call me to become a nun,” she recalls.



Sister Jean Ann recalls that during her first year at Epiphany, the parish built an addition onto the school just behind the wardrobe in her classroom, so there was a lot of noise going on every day with bulldozers and cranes.

She had an aunt who was a St. Joseph Sister. Sister Jean Ann had been taught first by the Adrian Dominicans, then by the IHMs. “So, she says, “I had a choice to be ‘white,’ ‘black’ or ‘blue.’”

He replied indignantly, “I *am* taking my seat!”

“That year was quite a challenge,” she laughed.

She chose “the blue,” entering the IHM community a few weeks after graduating from St. Francis de Sales High School in Detroit.

She taught primary grades at Gesu, Detroit, and St. Alphonsus Liguori in San Leandro, Calif. Many children in San Leandro had never seen snow. One day, a parent brought in a cooler full of snow, so Sister Jean Ann and Sister Honey Humphrey demonstrated how to make and throw snowballs – a big no-no in Michigan!

Her father had a hard time letting go of his oldest daughter. As the family left Monroe, her father was so upset he couldn’t drive; her brother had to drive home to Detroit.



There were three boys and three girls in her family. Sister Jean Ann was second oldest and the first girl. She had often taken care of her younger siblings. “Because of this,” she said, “when I began to teach, I related well to my young students.”

Returning to Michigan, she taught upper grades in St. Joseph, Monroe; St. Boniface in Detroit, where she was also principal; St. Joseph, Trenton; St. Vincent de Paul, Detroit; and St. Cyprian, Riverview.

In 1942, her first assignment as a novice was as a substitute teacher at Christ the King in Detroit. She had 40 first grade students. Only three weeks later, she was sent across town to St. Agnes to teach second grade to 64 students! She taught there for six years. Next, she was sent to Epiphany in Detroit where she had 120 first-graders – 60 in the morning, the other 60 in the afternoon.

In 1985, after 44 years of teaching, she retired to the Motherhouse. Here she ministered as transportation coordinator and driver for 23 years; then she worked in the Service Office in what is now The Boutique; and as a shopper for Motherhouse residents and was involved in prayer ministry.



Sister Jean Ann says, “All of these ministries have been part of my 80-year journey as an IHM – very happy 80 years.”