



Joan is the oldest child of four born to Frank and Elizabeth (Galerieau). She was born in Michigan in 1930 but moved back and forth between Michigan and Minnesota until age 11, when her father got a permanent job with General Motors.

The family resided in Roseville; Joan first became acquainted with the IHMs in sixth grade at Sacred Heart. She continued her IHM education through high

school at St. Mary, Mt. Clemens. "We knew they [the IHMs] really cared about us," she says. Joan fell in love with the whole group!

Her parents were not totally supportive of her decision to enter religious life. Mother Teresa McGivney suggested she attend Marygrove for a year in hopes that her parents would begin to accept her choice. They didn't change much by the end of that year, so in a painful departure, Joan left home in August 1949, driven to Monroe by relatives of one of the sisters. Her parents came to accept and take pride in her choice when it was obvious that she was happy and settled.

The day after her profession, Joan was sent to St. Raymond in Detroit, teaching 62 seventh graders! The discipline was a tremendous challenge but got easier the next year in sixth grade at St. Anne, Warren, then fifth grade at St. Francis de Sales. She found her niche when she arrived at Immaculata High School. She loved her time there and keeps in touch with many former students.



Joan's thirst for learning led her to graduate work in theology at Marquette University, during which time she also taught at Marygrove. Joan said, "I think the Marygrove students gave me more than I gave them. Such spirited young women!"

Joan did further post-graduate work in theology at Catholic University, which prepared her for her next ministry as director of religious education at St. Ephrem Parish in Sterling Heights. In 1985, her good friend, Dorothy McDaniel, IHM, was elected Provincial. Joan was elected as Assistant Provincial and secretary to the province. When Dorothy was elected IHM President 1988-1994, Joan was invited to serve as Dorothy's secretary and General Secretary for the congregation.



Their friendship shared many interests and commitments – feminism, love of animals, gardening – to the point of giving retreats on some of these topics. They integrated new insights from feminist theology with new understandings from ecology, all of which deepened Joan’s spirituality.

She moved to the Motherhouse in 2011 and began working in Archives, specializing in collecting oral histories from sisters. Joan and Dorothy would often be seen together feeding the stray cats they had befriended on the

campus. Although Dorothy is no longer able to join her, Joan – with the help of supporters – continues to watch over the cats, making sure they have shelter and food.

Joan says she would like to “be remembered as a person of peace, who always showed respect for all people and all species.” She knows that everything she has been given because of her life as an IHM has been pure GIFT.