

*“I relate to St. Francis of Assisi, finding God in creation.”*

Sister Carola Keffler grew up in Canton, Ohio, with her three siblings. The Sisters of St. Joseph taught her in elementary school; the IHM Sisters taught her for the her first three years of high school; and the Humility of Mary Sisters for her senior year.



Once she entered, she was surprised by the times of silence but felt the deep peace of her decision. She loved the prayers and devotions she learned during formation.

Two of Sister Carola’s cousins, Sisters Mary and Jean Laubacher, joined the IHM congregation and several times, she accompanied her aunt and uncle on their summer visits to the Motherhouse. It was during those visits that Sister Carola saw the sisters’ joy for life. “They always seemed so happy,” she says.

Sister Carola had always felt she had a vocation. When she was little, she was so drawn to the sisters that when they passed her, she would boldly reach out to touch their veils.

“It was a privilege to see them walk from the convent to the school,” she recalls. She enjoyed carrying their books for them and staying after class to help clean the classroom.

She fought her vocation though, because she didn’t want to leave her home and family, but it grew stronger as she got older. Her mother wanted Sister Carola to stay home for a year after high school graduation and get a job, so she worked as a bank bookkeeper for several months.

She enjoyed it very much, but not wanting to lose her vocation, she joined the following winter, in February 1946; “There was that urge within me.”



Sister Carola spent the first 20 years of her ministry teaching first and fourth grades in Michigan schools. She taught at St. Patrick, Carleton; Sacred Heart, Roseville; St. Anne, Warren; Gesu, Detroit; St. Mary, Mt. Morris; St. Bede, Southfield; and St. Regis, Bloomfield Hills. Then she worked as the school secretary at Holy Name in Birmingham for 16 years. When she first

arrived at Holy Name, a parishioner took her to Alaska, which was a wonderful trip.

After Holy Name, she returned to Gesu and worked as the school secretary for 15 years. “I loved being the school secretary because then I knew everyone in the whole school!” Sister Carola says. Her organizational skills came in handy as a secretary.

During her days of working in the schools, she completed her bachelor’s degree in English and theology, and later, her master’s degree in education.

Sister Carola retired after her years at Gesu – her favorite place of ministry. She loves the Motherhouse and the sisters who live there. Being at the Motherhouse allows her more time to pray, read and relax. Her greatest joy has been her “growth in spirituality from postulancy to the present.”



She is most grateful for her education, both formally and spiritually.

*Carola Keffler*