

Everyone who knows me knows I love Ohio; was born and raised there; and lived significant parts of my life in that beautiful state.

I was born in Cleveland in 1936, the third child and only daughter of Charles and Helen Mehling. With one older brother and two younger ones, I spent many hours wishing that I had a sister.

Soon after the Second World War we moved to live across from St. Ann School because my mother considered it essential that we attend a Catholic school. Later, I graduated from Beaumont School for Girls. In both schools, we were taught by the Ursuline Sisters. Following graduation from high school, where I thought about being a sister, I attended Mount St. Joseph College in Cincinnati, sponsored by the Sisters of Charity. I heard about the IHM Sisters from a college classmate. Following sophomore year, I applied and then came to Monroe as a Postulant. During the first year of Novitiate, I was told that I should go home, finish college and get a job. While this was painful at the time, I know that it was the best thing for me.

Following college graduation and some work experience, I returned to the IHM community and was received into the Novitiate.

During the Novitiate, having finished college certified as a teacher, I taught at St. Mary in Monroe where I could walk to school. An occasional charge was to drive the “paddy wagon” to take the student teachers to their assignments in the Monroe city schools.



I always loved teaching, first in the upper grades and then high school. (High school is better, I always say.) Some places of particularly happy memory are St. Stephen in Port Huron; Lorain Catholic and most recently, Gilmour Academy in Gates Mills, Ohio. Interspersed in the years as teacher, I enjoyed eight years in campus ministry at Hallinan Center at Case Western Reserve University in Cleveland and another five years in parish ministry at St. Dominic Parish in Shaker Heights, Ohio. Teaching skills served me well in any ministry.

For several years during these ministries,

I was able to live with my parents in their later years of declining health. I will always be grateful for the opportunity this provided for me as well as my family.



Along with celebrating 60 years as an IHM, I am participating in Movement 1 of the community process on spirituality. Here, I have been able to recognize the gift that my life has been. The process

has helped me to see that my growth in spirituality leads to greater knowledge of and acceptance of who I am.

Today I see that all is gift. My family today is made up of one brother and two sisters-in-law and a number of nieces and nephews. The IHM community welcomed me back many years ago and supports me through the ups and downs of life “all down the years.”



Mary Ann Mehling