

Patrice Selby

Sister Patrice Selby grew up in Akron, Ohio, with her nine siblings. Her teachers were Humility of Mary Sisters in grade school and Akron Dominicans in high school.

Her older sister had joined the IHM community, and Sister Patrice came to know the congregation through her sister, Sister Genevieve (Paulita). It was the fun-loving nature, kindness and the sisters' sense of humor that attracted her. She felt called to join and entered the community right after high school. She didn't tell her family she was joining; her sister found out from reading her letter of intent.

Sister Patrice fondly recalls her novitiate when the novices played baseball, basketball and ping pong. As long as they carried books, their superiors assumed they were going to study and didn't ask questions. "We had a good time," she laughs.

Her first missions were in Michigan: St. Patrick in Carleton, where she taught first and second grades for three years; and St. Matthew in Flint, where she taught first grade for three years and enjoyed the tutelage of a warm, loving superior.

She left Michigan to open a school in an army barracks in Mobile, Ala. "The kids were a delight, but the weather was oppressively hot," Sister Patrice recalls. She worked tirelessly at school and became aware of the racial prejudices prevalent in the area.



In Mobile, she got a dog named Kelly, a wonderful companion. She also got spinal meningitis and attributes her survival to the new drug at the time, penicillin; she was one of the first to receive it.

Returning to Michigan after four years, Sister Patrice went to Mother of Our Savior in Detroit where she taught fourth and sixth grades and then to St. Mary in Mt. Morris, teaching junior high school for four years and serving as principal for two. She earned her master's degree in school administration from DePaul University

and taught at St. Felicitas in Chicago before becoming principal at Chicago's Our Lady Gate of Heaven School.

She left Gate of Heaven to teach at St. Irene in Warrenville, Ill., before returning to Akron following the death of Sister Genevieve, who had been her mother's companion. She taught eighth grade for a year at Immaculate Conception School in Akron and then left to become IHM provincial treasurer for the next eight years. After this, Sister

Patrice went to Hazelden, Minn., to train as an addictions counselor and chaplain before working at a drug treatment center in Raleigh, N.C.

She helped open a drug treatment facility in West Palm Beach, Fla., where she worked for 20 years. Two years before she retired, Sister Patrice trained a service dog; the dog helped many of the clients at the facility make progress toward recovery.

Sister Patrice's greatest joy is being part of the "solidarity of a group of women with a common purpose." She is most grateful for the "love and support over the years, through good times and bad."

