

Annette St-Amour, IHM



In celebrating the call to IHM life, Annette found joy in how each leg of life's journey led to the next. Annette was born December 3, 1943, on Third Street in Highland Park, Mich. She was the third child, only girl, born to Arthur and Mea St-Amour. Her younger brother completed the family, four children. Their home language was French, spoken by their French-Canadian parents. The children learned English in school and mostly responded in English. Yet, kept up their French during annual visits to relatives in Canada. All went to St. Gregory School in Detroit with IHM teachers. Annette interacted with the sisters through involvement in school-activities.

After listening to Annette encourage and share with those committing to deeper prayer life through Sodality, the IHM moderator was moved to write a note asking if Annette had considered religious life. Her response was, "Thank you for thinking of me. I feel honored, but that is not what I am

planning." However, the Spirit was working within her heart. Over the next few months, she came to know, she would be an Immaculate Heart of Mary Sister.

During Formation, Annette loved studying Liturgy and Theology. Learning about Prayer and Scripture in the Novitiate nourished her spirit. She loved celebrating feast days with simple decorations in the dining room and joining together with Novices and Juniors.

Annette's first mission was to teach First Grade at Gesu Parish, Detroit and St. Thomas Aquinas, both for three years. The following four years, she remained at St. Thomas Aquinas as member of the Parish-Team ministering as Religious Formation Coordinator. Those years were a time of growth in many ways.

In 1975, Annette went to Fort Kipp Sioux Reservation in Brockton, Montana to prepare Native American children for sacraments. The following year, she moved to the Reservation to be part of the parish team and teach in the public school full-time. This proved to be challenging and led to her moving to Sidney, Montana. She became Religious Formation Director for the next eight years, working among rural communities and found it most life-affirming. Little did Annette know, it was preparation for a call to Africa.



Annette was one of four IHMs who opened a Mission in Howick, South Africa in October 1985, collaborating with Redemptorists in Parish Ministry. For ten years, Annette ministered with the Zulu Catechist in the Black Township and rural Mission-Stations, forming Small RCIA Communities. During that time, she moderated the historic 1994 Election for Nelson Mandela. In 1996, Annette moved to Durban to be Diocesan Formation Director in collaboration with Emily Mthethwa, Zulu-speaking coordinator for seventeen life-enriching years, a total of twenty-eight years in South Africa.

From 2014 to 2019 Annette lived and worked inter-congregationally and internationally with sisters, priests, brothers in South-Sudan. Her ministry, during their civil war, was formation of diocesan pastoral teams and full-time catechists. This included Trauma-Healing ministry, as well as empowerment of women and forming small Christian communities.

All has been blessing!

