

Margaret Mary O'Shea, IHM



The first of seven children of Margaret Convery and Neal O'Shea, Sister Peg O'Shea was born in 1943. Her childhood was marked by a feeling of responsibility for her family. She deeply loved her parents and the six siblings who came after her: Jim, Tom, Tim, Cathy, Kevin and Terry. Silvia Hurtado Ruelas from Mexico was 'adopted' by her family and Joe Froslic is loved to this day as an O'Shea. Most weekends their family visited grandparents in Canada, and occasionally drove to Atlanta, Ga, to visit their Dad's relatives.

One day on the way to St. Brigid Grade School, the owner of the corner gas station asked her why she was always smiling. She did not tell him her secret. She had a pamphlet from church that told her the Trinity dwelled inside each person. This secret shaped the rest of her life.

While a student at Immaculata High School in Detroit, Peg was thinking she would marry and have ten children. It was either that or becoming a sister! In 1961, Peg entered the IHM congregation and began a journey of God's amazing love.

Margaret Brennan, novice mistress, opened the Scriptures to her for the first time. Margaret returned again and again to the refrain of 'the Person of Jesus as the center of our lives'. Mary McDevitt introduced Sister Peg to Vatican II and Mary Jo Maher extended her vision to the poor and abandoned. The IHM Congregation revealed the reality of God's love for every person and creature that God called to life.

Although she admired Sister Marie Winifred, the Education Teacher, Peg never felt at home teaching in classrooms in Michigan and Ohio, grade or high school. She felt emancipated when she was missioned to Visitation House of Prayer, theological studies in Toronto, pastoral ministry in North Carolina, secretary of the Mission Province at Monroe and teaching Alphonsian Spirituality with young Redemptorist candidates in St. Louis. For the past 30 years, she has enjoyed a variety of ministries in South Africa, especially 'Principal' of a preschool for poor Zulu children, HIV/AIDS Outreach, support for abused children, parish pastoral ministry. Peg felt deep support in all of her ministries in South Africa by Hindu, Muslim and Christian women – Zulu, Indian, so-called 'Colored' and White. Peg felt that their faith, prayer, fasting and almsgiving humbled her.





Her favorite Scripture passage is Philippians 2:6-9. Studying and teaching Alphonsian Spirituality deepened her understanding of this reality of the love of God in entering into human history in Jesus Christ. Annette Boyle deeply inspired her love for Saint Alphonsus and for Jesus.

In this Jubilee, Peg is celebrating how the IHM Congregation has changed her understanding of life and broadened her vision of what is important, what matters. During her thirty plus years abroad, she has always felt the support of IHMs in Africa as well as those sisters in Monroe. She is grateful.