

Mary Ann Markel, IHM



Mary Ann Markel's love of nature and hard work come naturally. She grew up on a farm in Marine City, Mich., where her family raised wheat, oats and corn to feed the cows. There was a vegetable garden for the family. There was 18 years between the oldest and youngest of five siblings. They all pitched in to help on the farm. Mary Ann recalls that when her older brothers were in the service, she, just a youngster herself, helped by driving the horses during the hay harvest. Using pulleys and ropes to get it into the barn. Is it any wonder then, that even to this day, Mary Ann is a hard worker?

Mary Ann attended a one-room schoolhouse for first and second grades. From third through graduation she attended Holy Cross Elementary School and Holy Cross High School (now Cardinal Mooney Catholic High School) in Marine City. She often stayed after school to help the nuns. The "call" to become an IHM came as a call to "serve." Her mother was okay with her vocation. Her father had a harder time saying goodbye to his daughter. The day she entered the congregation, Aug. 22, 1951, Mary Ann drove herself and her family to Monroe. She gave her watch, a graduation gift, to her sister at the door of the convent along with the keys to the family car, thinking she would never drive again. Mary Ann described herself as very homesick while adapting to this new way of life. What stands out for her from those early Formation days was the sense of being together. While others may have groaned about the tasks of picking berries, Mary Ann thrived on these collective community activities.

Once out on Mission she found a new love of teaching. She loved the students, her relationship with them and a certain sense of community. Her ministry took her to St. Mary's (Redford, Mich.), St. Felicitas (Chicago, Ill.), Sacred Heart Elementary (Auburn Hills, Mich.), Our Lady of Assumption (Albuquerque, N.M), Our Lady Queen of Hope and St. Suzanne School (Detroit, Mich.).



Mary Ann found herself mentored by others and in turn mentored to many in her role as teacher, principal and as Provincial of the Northwest Province 1988-1994. She was Mission Counselor in Congregational Leadership from 1994-2000. She stayed in service to the IHM community in Mission Integration 2001-2011, was invited by leadership to the Hospitality House at 408 in 2012 until now. She became a life liaison at the



Motherhouse and continues to serve the sisters in that capacity. These were just a few of the many “surprises” over seventy years. Is it any wonder that she knows so many and so many know her?

To this Mary Ann states, “I have loved every ministry”, “I have had a good life and I wouldn’t trade it for anything!” Those of us who know Mary Ann can vouch for her as a gift to many, an animator, a lover of nature and a very wise woman!