

## Monica Stuhlreyer, IHM



“Our hearts were made for thee O God and they shall not rest until they rest in thee.” When we read St. Augustine in college, those words struck me and really fit my experience of seeking God.

I was born and grew up in Cincinnati, Ohio. I was the oldest girl in a family of six children. I had two brothers and three sisters. My parents, Anthony Stuhlreyer and Virginia Blasing were both from German, Catholic backgrounds and were products of the Depression. My Dad was deeply religious, and attended daily Mass for years. His spiritual values influenced me greatly.

I attended St. John’s school for eight years, loved the rituals of Holy Week and often attended daily Mass. I went to Regina High School and joined the Glee Club

where I met girls who became friends. I totally enjoyed our singing together for yearly concerts and working together for something of beauty.

When it was time for college, I looked into Marygrove College in Detroit because I knew of the school through a woman friend. I loved Marygrove, the friends I made, the classes I took, the exposure to culture and life. I especially appreciated getting into the Sodality which taught me about Jesus as a friend, religion as a “way of Life”. It enabled me to grow in my relationship with God and led me to want to join the IHM Sisters. I saw them as broad in their interests and concerns, challenging teachers, and most importantly, women of prayer.

I felt that God had been so good to me, that I wanted to respond in gratitude, to give my life to God.

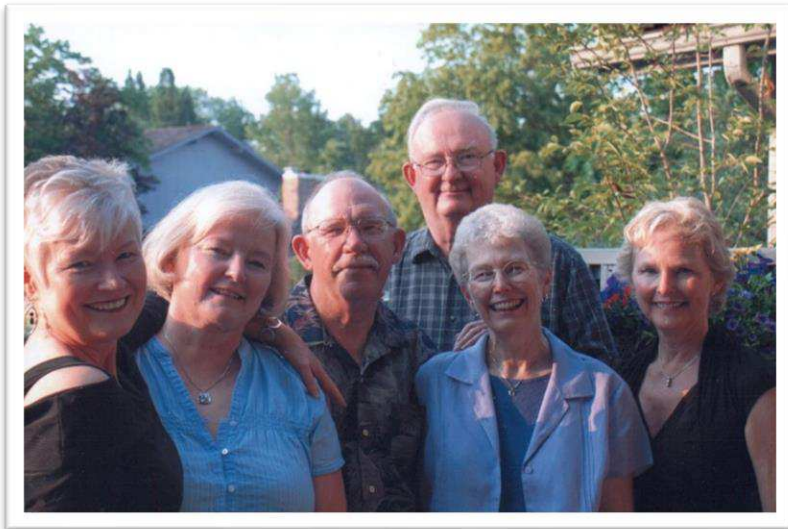
The best thing about the novitiate was that we learned new scripture studies and to pray. We were blessed to be in the novitiate just as the Second Vatican Council began in 1962. It was an exciting time with all the new that was happening in the Church: The Constitution on the Liturgy, on the Church and all the many changes in the way we expressed our Faith.

Soon I was preparing to teach the new catechetics when I got my Master’s in Religious Education at Pius XII Center, University of Detroit. I became the



DRE (Director of Religious Education) at St. Owen Parish. It had no school, so we taught interested laity how to teach catechetics as the “Good News” not the obligation structure!

To assist others in their own search for God, I studied Spiritual Direction in two programs. It helped me in my Formation work as IHM Novice Director. At the Paulist Center in Grand Rapids, we began the RCIA (Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults) process, assisting persons in their initiation into Catholic Faith.



When my parents were both diminishing, I returned to Cincinnati to monitor their care. While there I worked for the Diocese of Covington, KY as Director of the Lay Ministry Formation program, always encouraging growth in Faith.

I realized again and again that “all along the way is the WAY.”