

Anne (Michael Ann) Wisda, IHM

“God has a plan for each one of us. I could never have planned my life the way it worked out. My faith was deepened, my prayer life nourished, my global vision expanded.”

During the “Mary Weekend” in my junior year of high school, I had a brief interview with



Mother Teresa McGivney. She was gentle and kind. Throughout high school, I truly felt called to become an IHM Sister. I informed my parents and on Aug. 19, 1952, my mother, father and entire family accompanied me to Monroe. After my formation years, I became an elementary teacher. At the time of the Cuban Missile Crisis, I was sent to Florida to teach Cuban refugees. Most of my 50 first graders did not speak English and I did not speak Spanish.

In 1969, I was invited by my Mission Counselor to minister as a Religious Education Coordinator in Burnsville, Minnesota. One of my teachers worked with orphans in Vietnam through Friends for All Children. In 1974, she invited me to assist with the orphans. A few days before Christmas, we accompanied three infants and two toddlers on their journey to their adopting American families. Vietnam was a heart-wrenching experience for me. My brief ministry there changed me forever. I became aware of the injustices of poverty and war.

After the collapse of Saigon in 1975, I became the Director of the Refugee Resettlement Program at Catholic Social Ministries in Oklahoma City. My ministry with Indochinese refugees took me to Korea to process Vietnamese refugees out of the camp in Pusan. I was also sent with a team of Refugee Resettlement



Directors to set up a program to teach Philippine teachers how to teach English as a Second Language to the refugees at the camp at Bataan. For eight years, I worked tirelessly to get sponsors and process thousands of refugees into the Archdiocese of Oklahoma City. The 20 ethnic groups that spoke 18 different languages expanded my global vision.

While in Oklahoma, I was invited by Mary Jo Maher, IHM, to be the IHM Mission Education Coordinator. After eight years, the IHM Mission Center closed. IHM Leadership then appointed me to become the



Justice Advocacy and Education Coordinator. During these six years, I was asked to act as the official Tri-IHM liaison with the Little Sisters in Haiti for the Tri-IHM Haiti Outreach Project. Haiti has an extraordinary place in my heart.

From 2002-2010, I was employed as the Service Coordinator at the Luther Haus in Temperance, Michigan. My ministry was to be a pastoral social worker for

103 lower-income senior residents who lived independently in 91 apartments. I became sensitized to the reality that seniors need compassionate and professional services in order to maintain their independence.

In my years of retirement, I have been blessed with many volunteer opportunities. I am grateful for my 70 years of life and ministry as a Sister, Servant of the Immaculate Heart of Mary.