

*“One ministry prepares you for the next.”*

Sister Carolyn (William Mary) Campbell was born in Jackson, Michigan, the oldest of five. She grew up in a neighborhood with most of her extended family, and the IHM Sisters taught her at St. John Grade School and High School.

When she was about 10, she felt called to religious life, which she describes as “just knowing this is what I want to do with my life.”

She knew she was where she belonged when she entered the IHM community. Sister Carolyn recalls skating on the River Raisin while a postulant and laughs as she remembers how dirty she got picking potatoes out at the farm.

After her student teaching, she taught second grade at Epiphany, Detroit. She went to St. Regis (Bloomfield Hills), where she taught seventh grade. These experiences provided the skills and training for Sister Carolyn to teach junior high and become a principal in Puerto Rico.

She was ministering in Puerto Rico (as a teacher and then as a principal) during Vatican II. While in Puerto Rico, she returned to her baptismal name and began to wear street clothes.

After seven years, Sister Carolyn left Puerto Rico and studied for a year at the Mexican American Cultural Center in San Antonio, Texas. In 1976, she and two other IHM Sisters set up an office in New York for the overseas mission province, a center for the IHM sisters returning to the United States from overseas missions. During this time, she also ministered as director of religious education in a parochial school in New York City.

In 1981, Sister Carolyn moved to Florida to become principal of St. Michael in Miami. During the Christmas break in 1988, she returned home to care for her dying father. She returned to Miami to finish the school year and remained for one more year before returning to Michigan to be principal at St. Albert the Great.

She continued her education with a clinical pastoral education (CPE) program. She interned at Mercy Memorial Hospital in Monroe, which hired her as a chaplain once she had earned her CPE certification. She stayed for six years before being elected to the IHM Leadership Council during the renovation of the Motherhouse. Her admiration for the sisters living there increased.

“I admire them so much because they had to move from here to the Academy. We were in very crowded conditions, but we were all in it together. It was a wonderful time of community. The spirit of sacrifice and working together seemed to bring out the best in people. I got to know the sisters so well and appreciated all that they were and had done.”

Following her term in Leadership, she returned to Mercy Hospital. She has always relied on reflection and prayer to stay her course. "I truly believe that this is where I belong."