

NOVEMBER 2024

IHM SISTERS E-NEWS

What's in Your Soap?

By Janet Ryan, IHM

Living in harmony with the Earth calls us to be more environmentally sensitive. The Season of Creation's message from Sept. 1 through Oct. 4, 2024, was just that in calling us to deeper faith and to reflect more on being part of the web of life. The opportunities and challenges abound in attempting to be more Earth-friendly.

One simple way is to use biodegradable plant-based organic soap in bars or liquid in recyclable bottles. Antibacterial soap, highly marketed as a cleanser, is no more effective than organic soap. According to it is also harmful to the environment because of the chemicals it contains. Being biodegradable is a major environmental benefit of organic soap.

The Federal Drug Agency has banned triclosan and triclocarban, commonly found in antibacterial soap,

because they cause more potent strains of bacteria to arise, increase bacterial and antibiotic resistance, are hormonal inhibitors and are toxic to fish food and aquatic plants. Other antibacterial soap makers now substitute with chemicals benzalkonium chloride, benzethonium chloride and chloroxylenol. These are currently under study. The World Health

Organization has identified antibiotic resistance as a global health threat. Antibacterial liquid soap containers also contribute to plastic pollution, another environmental threat.



Recently, Mrs. Meyer's liquid hand soap containing olive oil and aloe vera, specifically made to clean and freshen hands without drying, has been placed

in the public bathrooms and the independent living area of the IHM Senior Living Community due to concerns with antibacterial soaps and the IHM commitment sustainably. Without parabens,

Continued on next page ...



What's in your soap...

phthalates or animal-derived ingredients, Mrs. Meyer's soap products are made with a cruelty-free formula, reasonably priced and locally available.

You may wish to explore other organic soaps for personal use, such as Vermont Country Soap, Miessence products, Paul Mitchell's Organic Soap, Tom's of Maine Soaps, and even good old Ivory Soap, which is 100% pure. Another option is Dr. Bronner's Pure Castile Soap, which is made with 100% plant-based resources, though it is more expensive.

Quinn Pare, a Pfizer Corporation microbiologist, was a consultant on this article.

From the Archives ... a look back

"Do you have any information about my aunt?"

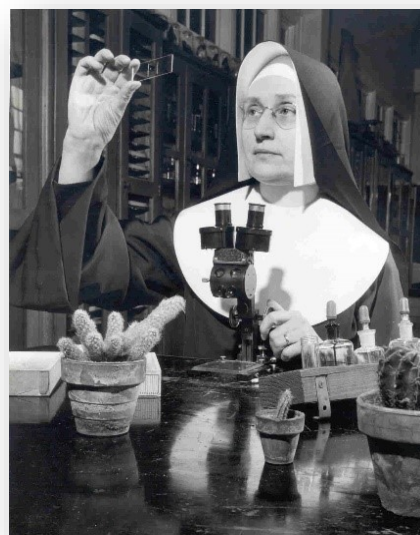
So many requests sent to the IHM Archives begin this way: Do you have any information about my aunt? Or my favorite teacher? Or the Sister in our parish?

One such request this summer came from the Dallas-Ft. Worth area. A gentleman e-mailed IHM President Jane Herb to ask for background about his aunt, Martha Helen Remski. He knew she was the 10th child in the family and they said she had a "magic" birthdate: 03/03/03. He knew her as an exceptional woman in and of higher education. The email was forwarded to Archivist Jennifer Meacham. Within an hour, he received a reply from Jennifer listing specific dates, degrees, and a complete ministry record for Sister Marie Fidelis Remski. His quick response back was, "WOW!!!"

Sister Marie Fidelis did, indeed, have an unusual career. She entered the community on June 24, 1920. She was sent to the University of Michigan to study science and received her BA degree in botany in 1924 and an MA degree in biology in 1936 while also teaching at St. Mary Academy. She earned a Ph.D in botany in 1953. She spent the summer of 1963 in Peru, where she climbed the Andes to find the cactus she wanted to research.

Her nephew said he was in college himself in 1961 when Sister participated in a 60-day invited conference on radiological mutations in plants. He was excited to hear about her experience, but when he asked, she said, "It was really wonderful. I finally got to ride in a Volkswagen Beetle!" He added that she rarely spoke about herself or her work because of her humility. She taught for almost 20 years at Marygrove and, after "retirement," spent another 18 years at colleges in Florida. She died March 27, 2000, at the age of 97.

Her grateful nephew said he is sharing details of her life with his sons' generation "to have her story serve as inspiration for them and their children." The Archives is privileged to preserve the story of the IHM Sisters and community.



**This article originally appeared in the Fall 2019 issue of the IHM Archives newsletter, Today and Yesterday. All issues of the newsletter can be accessed [here](#).*

The Heart and Soul Revival Retreat: A Play as You Pray Time Away By Lynne Moldenhauer, IHM

In May 2024, the Maxis IHM Spirituality Center initiated a new retreat program for the Sisters who reside in the IHM Senior Living Community (IHM SLC). The intent behind this retreat is rooted in a spirituality of rejuvenation, allowing for more spacious time for sisters accustomed to a more institutional setting. The goal is relaxation, play, recreation, good food and enjoyable free time. Lunch and supper are the only scheduled events. Five IHMs attended the Heart and Soul Revival in May, which Sisters Diane Brown and Lynne Moldenhauer attended. They were treated to a relaxed use of time, lunch and supper prepared by Diane and Lynne, movies, games, a trip to Wyandotte's Bishops Park and ice cream. They also toured the Riverview IHM Residence and the Altar Bread Ministry. All enjoyed it, and it was a learning experience for us. menu ideas from those attending.



In July 2024, we held the second Heart and Soul Revival. Sisters Diane and Lynne again crafted the meals and provided games, movies, and a trip to Elizabeth Park in Trenton. Sister Alice Baker graciously offered to take those who wanted to shop at a local mall. We had planned for a campfire with s'mores, but it was unfortunately rained out. Sister Diane, being the clever woman she is, made s'mores in the microwave. They were very much appreciated and delicious!

It's a blessing to offer this to our sisters. We understand that some may be unable to commit to four days or even an overnight stay. Therefore, we are excited to share that we are exploring the possibility of day programming in the future, providing more opportunities for our Sisters to participate and benefit from the retreat experience.

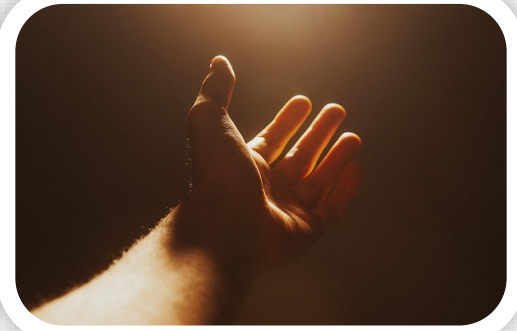


Nestled in a woodland, Maxis Spirituality Center in Riverview, MI, invites one to "enter the quiet." The center is available for private, group and directed retreats. Prayer gatherings and other programs are offered throughout the year. It has space for up to 25 for day use and overnight use for up to 12. Learn more [here](#).

El Viaje al Norte: I crossed the border and you supported and guided me

By Gloria Rivera, IHM

Deysi, pregnant with her fifth child, her husband Joel and their four-year-old Erick began their el viaje al norte (the northern journey) about two years ago from Tegucigalpa, Honduras. They had to flee because their lives were in danger from gangs who threatened them, demanding a \$200 monthly payment. When they could not pay, their small restaurant business was destroyed by fire. Death threats followed, not only for them but for other members of their family. They fled to Chiapas and crossed the border.



This family came via Reynosa/McAllen, Texas. Sister Carmen Armenta Lara heard they were headed for Detroit and contacted me. I believe Providence brought them to the SW Detroit neighborhood in March 2021. Yet, their freedom from gang violence gave way to other fears. Deysi had yet to see a doctor and Joel was unemployed. How would they know whom to trust?

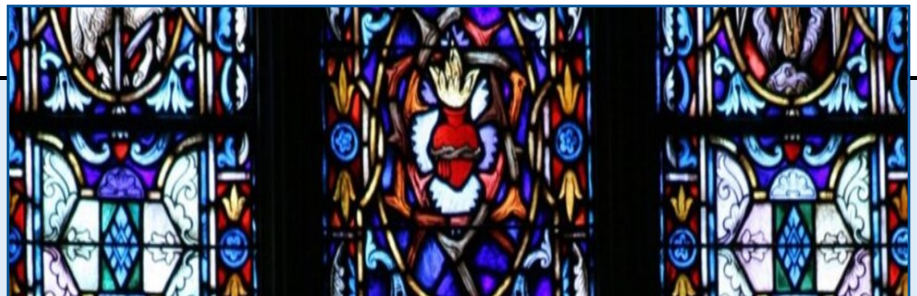
What happens once migrants arrive at their destination? They need safe housing from landlords who do not exploit them, pro bono immigration lawyers, bilingual education for their children, work permits that do not take months to obtain, clothing, furniture, medical and dental care, food and so much more. They need advocates who speak on their behalf and share their stories. Through the generosity of many, we have responded to most of these needs. Not all migrants are so fortunate.

How do we show “the face of God” to the thousands of migrants from all parts of the world crossing our southern border daily? Do we add to their fears and insecurity through detention, family separation, disrespect and intimidation? Do we keep them in Mexico until an unreliable appointment system sends them a text message with a date and time to cross? Are we cognizant of life in the “tent cities” where they wait amid danger, lack of sanitation and extortion to get food?

If you meet someone like this family, reach out in compassion so they can see God’s face through yours. Ask yourself what Jesus would do not only to respond to their needs but also to change the systems of oppression that force families to flee their countries in search of a better place where their children can thrive. Become an advocate that counteracts the hatred that migrants experience these days, and continue to work toward fair immigration reform.

Rememberings

We are pleased to announce a new feature of the IHM Sisters website: a searchable tool for Rememberings. A Remembering is



read by an IHM at a fellow sister's Mass of Christian Burial. It tells about the sister's life, recalls her memories, and expresses our love and appreciation of her. The style and content of these have changed over the years, but some form—from a few paragraphs to several pages—is on file for every IHM Sister who has entered eternal life. The Rememberings search tool is available [here](#).

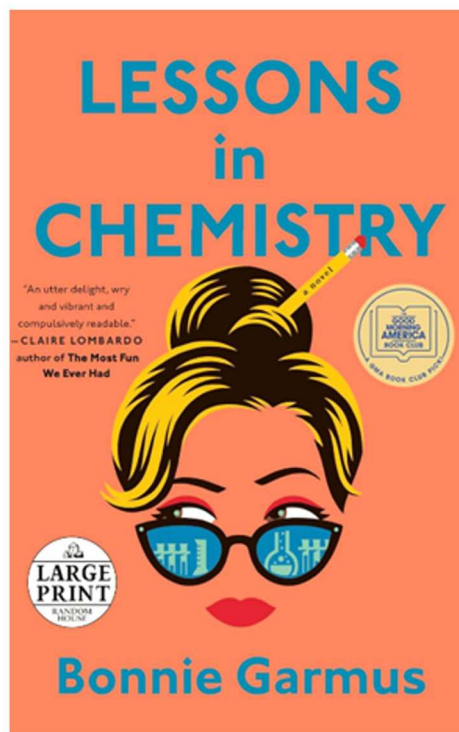
Worthy of note from the Alphonsus Liguori Library ...

Lessons in Chemistry by Bonnie Garmus Reviewed by library staff

It would be understandable if, after reading Bonnie Garmus' *Lessons in Chemistry*, you wonder about the gifts we all miss out on when people are thwarted in their efforts to express their full potential.

In her smart, polished and thought-provoking debut novel, Bonnie Garmus weaves the story of Elizabeth Zott, a gifted research chemist in the late 1950s and early 60s, who is fired from her job because she is unwed and pregnant. The firing is not her first encounter with sexism. She has had to fight for everything— respect from colleagues, research funding, even beakers. Without a job and needing to provide for her daughter, Elizabeth accepts an offer to host a cooking show called "Supper at Six." She soon becomes the reluctant star of America's favorite cooking show by not just teaching cooking to the so-called 'average housewife' but, instead, by teaching them chemistry. As she explains to a reporter, "When women understand chemistry, they understand how things work ... the real rules that govern the physical world. When women understand these basic concepts, they can begin to see the false limits that have been created for them." This is a recipe for nutritious meals with a healthy dose of empowerment baked into every dish.

Gamus' serious message comes wrapped in a deliciously funny novel. She has populated her story with larger-than-life characters, starting with Elizabeth, an entirely deadpan and absurdly self-assured feminist who is dogged in her refusal to be anything less than herself. Mix in the magnetic Calvin Harris, her brilliant and quirky daughter Madeline, the insightful dog Six-Thirty, her supportive neighbor Harriet and other improbable friends; combine witty dialogue and enjoy this an entertaining and absorbing story of love, loss and building a family.



The twilight of *Advent:* God whispers in our *darkness*

Presenter: Dr. Nicki Verploegen



Thursday, Dec. 12 – Saturday, Dec. 14, 2024
Thursday – Saturday: 10 – 11:30, and 2 – 3:30 p.m.

Maxis Community Room • IHM Motherhouse

Registration fee: \$225
Register here, call
734-240-5494, or email
spirituality@ihmsisters.org
by Nov. 25.

You are invited ... Sunday, November 10 at 3 p.m.

The free concert will be held in the IHM Chapel.

All are welcome to help celebrate Founders' Day!

The Monroe Community String Orchestra is thrilled to kick off the newly reinstated IHM Chapel Series with a concert on Sunday, November 10, at 3 pm. Our major work for this concert is St. Paul's Suite, written by Gustav Holst. Other notable composers represented include J.S. Bach, Vivaldi, and Grieg. Some of our favorite music in the program is actually by lesser-known composers. One of the pieces has the feel of an Irish ballad; one sounds like a heroic movie theme, and one is a familiar melody arranged specifically for this orchestra by our director, Ann Felder.



across the Monroe County region and beyond. They are under the direction of Ann M. Felder, the retired orchestra director from Monroe Public Schools. All individuals volunteer their time to rehearse on Wednesday evenings. The orchestra has 24 members playing violins, violas, celli and basses. Some musicians play in other bands and orchestras in the area, while others are picking up their instruments for the first time since high school. The orchestra focuses primarily on standard classical literature, although throwing in something unexpected is always fun.

The Monroe Community String Orchestra is a relatively new organization of adult string players

This semester, the orchestra functions solely as a string orchestra, but plans are already in place to add winds and percussion for some of our concerts.

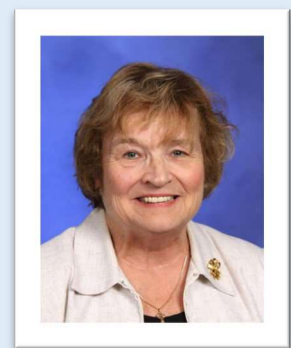
Remembering



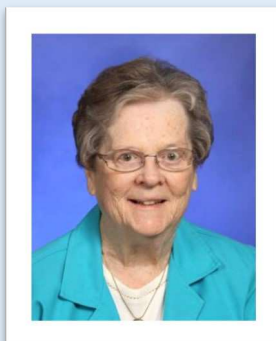
Read more about the lives and ministries of our Sisters and Associates



Anne (Ann Jerome)
Crane, IHM
June 4, 1934 –
Sept. 19, 2024



Rosemary Etue,
IHM Associate
Oct. 23, 1940 –
Sept. 19, 2024



Patricia (Helen Mary)
Aseltyne, IHM
July 25, 1927 –
Sept. 7, 2024



Isabel Santiago Martinez,
IHM Associate
Dec. 12, 1944 –
Sept. 18, 2024

Marygrove Minute

The Marygrove Alumni Association is pleased to report that 55 Marygrove alums and friends enjoyed a wonderful day of fellowship, remembrance, luncheon and tours on a lovely September Saturday. With the support of many volunteers and board members, the Marygrove Conservancy, and Durden's Catering, the 2024 Marygrove College Reunion was a well-received success. After a lovely continental breakfast, Tom Lewand, Marygrove Conservancy CEO, enthusiastically updated us on the educational miracle of the P-20 program on campus, which continues and deepens the legacy of our beloved college. We then traveled to the former Immaculata High School and enjoyed a great tour of the new School at Marygrove Elementary led by Assistant Principal Patrina Caldwell. It was an inspiring and refreshing look into the complete transformation and excellent, affirming atmosphere the local school children enjoy while building a learning community.

President Emerita Elizabeth Burns, '72, toasted the awesome Jubilee Class of 1974 and then Sister Sue Rakoczy, IHM, '67, offered a beautiful luncheon blessing that gave voice to the connection to Our Lady of Marygrove:

Let us take a moment to center and quiet our hearts from the rush to come here today. In the center of the campus is the tall and familiar statue of Our Lady of Marygrove. Today's prayer is based on the familiar hymn "Our Lady of Marygrove." Let us pray:

Mary, on the hundreds of times we have entered the campus, you have stood there, tall and welcoming. Marygrove has changed but you have not. You continue to be a loving presence in our lives and a companion to all those who now share this campus. You have touched our hearts in many ways. Today, we celebrate you as The Tower of Ivory who gives us strength, The Seat of Wisdom who makes us truly wise, The Cause of our joy, Our faithful sister and loyal friend. We have lived these gifts in our lives since we left Marygrove. Today, we ask for their growing fullness through your Son Jesus, our Brother and the deep presence of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

When all enjoyed a delicious luncheon, the group was treated to a thorough and enlightening presentation from University of Michigan educators Dr. Barry Fishman and Jay Meeks regarding the new on-campus program of LEAPS, complete with a slide presentation and Q & A time. Here is a small part you can view: [Welcome to LEAPS \(youtube.com\)](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=...).



Tours of the Starfish Early Education Center and The School at Marygrove High School followed, which are state-of-the-art examples of the excellent education being offered on campus. More photos from the day can be found on the Marygrove Alumni & Friends Facebook page. We pridefully note that The School at Marygrove (TSM) is among the top 10 schools in Detroit Public School Community District (DPSCD), and TSM High School is the #2 high school in the district after Cass Tech!

We welcome your questions or comments. So go to www.marygroveconservancy.org and click on Stay Involved: Alumni.



Another one of the day's highlights was the attendance of Bernadette Sloan Donohue, '59, who was our oldest attendee and arrived wearing a very special message.

Annual celebration of IHM Associates: *Daring, risking, dreaming and listening together* By: Barbara Bacci-Yugovich and Sister Anne Crimmins, IHM Associate Co-Coordiators



Sunday, Sept. 15, 2024, IHM Sisters and Associates joyfully celebrated 46 years of IHM Associates! In the morning homily, Barb shared how we, as Sisters and Associates, are called to hear and live our lives faithfully, drawing us into deeper faith and trust. We celebrated and affirmed the Lifelong Commitments of Judy Beyer-Chezick and Mary Jean Schoettle, whom IHM President Maxine Kollasch and IHM Liaison Lisandra Pedraza Burgos received.

The call of Associates directs their lives through prayer, community and service. All Associates in attendance renewed their commitment, joyfully received by the IHM President and the Sisters gathered. Our celebration continued with brunch and a time for prayer and reflection on the IHM Chapter theme, "Daring, Risking, Dreaming."

Our table sharing centered on three questions:

- ♦ How do we see the vocation of Associates as a distinct and unique vocation?
- ♦ How do IHM Sisters and Associates live the charism uniquely now?
- ♦ What are we daring, risking and dreaming as Sisters and Associates?



Some thoughts from our table conversations ...

- ♦ There is a spirit of welcome and connection; both follow a call.
- ♦ As Christian community members, we support and encourage one another to be faithful to the Gospel call. Sisters and Associates share in inspiring others. Although we have different ways of life, we share a common commitment to the Gospel. In recent years, IHM Motherhouse liturgies have provided a significant window into IHM life and ministry, calling some to become Associates.
- ♦ We are becoming interdependent. We desire to live the "liberating mission of Jesus," which draws others to seek this in their own lives.
- ♦ What are Sisters and Associates daring, risking and dreaming? We believe God calls us to weave one community, be open to what is yet unknown, live with deeper trust, commit to the journey without a defined outcome and risk together.

Through various ministries, IHM Sisters and Associates serve others, gather for prayer and sharing, serve at the borders, work to end trafficking, work in the City of Detroit and share in many outreach ministries. "We're listening together." We thank IHM Leadership for their support and presence and express gratitude to Ruth Meiring, Janice Mignano and Chuck VanVleet, IHM Associate Council members on the liturgy and event planning committees.

From the Development office

Theresa Maxis Award

The 2024 Theresa Maxis Award, held on October 17th at the Monroe Golf & Country Club, was an evening filled with inspiration and gratitude. A great time was had by all while recognizing and celebrating Cathy Miller, this year's award recipient. Cathy's unwavering commitment to faith, education and community service reflects the virtues of Theresa Maxis and the charism of the IHM congregation.

We are deeply grateful to all who attended, supported and sponsored this event. \$88,492 was raised to benefit IHM ministries and the retirement needs of the congregation.



Sister Judy (Celine Therese) Weirick, IHM

Retirement appeal

This year's IHM Retirement Appeal highlights the education, ministries and impact of several sisters who have made a lasting difference in the lives of many students, patients, families and friends. The IHM Sisters, no matter their age, remain deeply committed to their calling and ministry. View this year's appeal [here](#).

The cost to provide quality retirement services rises each year. We rely on your generosity to help bridge the gap between our financial resources and the actual cost of retirement. Your support is critical in helping us meet this challenge. Gifts to the IHM retirement fund can be made [here](#).

A precious peek at creation

By Nancy Lee Smith, IHM

What you see in my hand may appear just a small rock, but it's far more than that. This 1.85- billion-year-old piece of iron-formation rock from northern Minnesota, found by the geologist Phillip Larson, carries a unique perspective on creation. Phil, who had commissioned the icon of Blessed Niels Stenson, the founder of the science of geology, sent me a letter along with the rock. His insights, shared [here](#), are particularly valuable as we've recently closed the Season of Creation.

Phil writes, "It is not clear from the account of Genesis what Adam first perceived – did he hear the voice of God and awake, or did he awake in creation only later



"This humble rock, then, formed ages ago during the long process of Creation, serves to better our lives in spite of the greed, violence, and waste we unintentionally or purposely engender by its acquisition and use."

-Phillip Larson

come to know God? I like to think that Adam awoke to perceive the light filtering through the trees overhead, the breeze on his cheek, the sound of rushing water, the fragrance of flowers, and the cool Earth beneath his feet. In other words, the first revelation of the Creator was the goodness of Creation itself." The rock, seemingly unassuming, actually contains traces of some of the earliest life on Earth. Phil shares:

Single-celled algae combine carbon dioxide, water and sunlight to form sugar. This released oxygen into the sea and later opened the possibility for complex plant and animal life to evolve on land and sea.... it has been turned into the ships and rail and vehicles and bridges that bind people together, the buildings in which we live, study, work and pray and the plows we use to till our Earth to feed our people. Because of the iron wrested from this rock, more people are living longer, safer lives in better health today than at any time in human history.

This rock, in its various forms, has transformed the world in which we live. It is not just a little rock.

Right?

Then and now

Sister Mary Katherine Hamilton



Sister Mary Katherine (Michael Andrew) grew up in Ann Arbor and was taught by the IHM Sisters at St. Thomas the Apostle School from second grade through high school.

As a young child, she observed the connection the IHM Sisters had with their students, their authenticity and accessibility. In high school, she attended vocation and retreat days, outwardly brushing aside her attraction to a religious vocation, but internally, the call was deepening. "I think I just sort of knew by my sophomore year," she says. Sister Mary Katherine entered the community right after high school. The IHM community embraced Vatican II's vision, so being in formation during those years provided a rich theological and spiritual grounding. She admired the women at the forefront of the changes, as well as those challenging the status quo.

Remembering her own education with the IHM Sisters, Sister Mary Katherine envisioned teaching as an expression of ministry and a project worthy of a life's work. Her first teaching assignment was at St. Regis in Bloomfield Hills, Michigan.

[Continued...](#)

Sister Edith Marie Martinek

Sister Edith Marie Martinek credits her parents, James and Edith, with her vocation. Their deep faith, devotion to their weekly worship, and lives of personal prayer inspired her, and Duns Scotus, a Franciscan monastery, provided her with an atmosphere of peace and prayer.

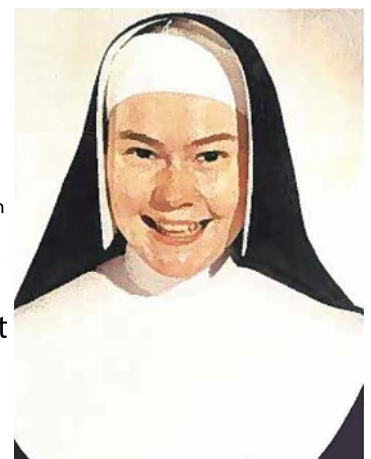
She joined the IHM Sisters shortly after graduating from high school and was joyfully received into the community in June 1954. Her first teaching assignment was at Christ the King in Detroit. "I spent 36 years teaching small children," Sister Edith Marie notes. "They were ever new and provided fun and challenge." Schools included nine in Michigan and one each in Minnesota and Florida.

Following her mother's death, she returned to school to prepare for a new ministry in pastoral care. After the school year ended in 1991, Sister Edith Marie left St. Albert the Great School in Dearborn Heights, Michigan. She began serving in pastoral ministry at Resurrection Parish in Standish, Michigan, where she stayed for 15 years before retiring.

"In ministry, I gave my time and energy to the spiritual care of the sick, the homebound, the hospitalized and the dying," she says. "These dear people teach you much about gratitude."

A friend notes that Sister Edith Marie's 50th Jubilee was a highlight, not just for Resurrection Parish but also for the town.

[Continued...](#)



NOVEMBER 7, 2024 — JANUARY 19, 2025

Maiden Voyages:

A Journey Through IHM Firsts



IHM Sisters have experienced many firsts in their 179-year history. These have included significant moments of transition and expansion, plus many that are perhaps less historic, but still deeply meaningful. This Founders' Day exhibit presents an array of IHM firsts, big and small, through photographs and stories from the IHM Archives.

Opening Reception:

Thursday, Nov 7th, 2024
5:30 – 7:00 pm

The Gallery is located at
610 W. Elm Ave., Monroe, MI

Monday through Friday from 10 am – 4 pm



IHM sisters

Deep Faith. Courageous Spirit. Action for Justice.

On the IHM website

♦ Pass it on ...

If you know someone who would like more information about what the IHM Sisters and Associates are doing, please forward this publication. If you have received this from a friend and would like to subscribe, click [here](#).

♦ ihmpact is published quarterly, highlighting news and events of the IHM Sisters as well as offering articles for reflection and contemplation. It is available by subscription or online.

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