

Maureen Kelly



I was born to Irish immigrant parents in Boston, the oldest of four children. We received our Catholic faith, a deep love of Mary and positive values. Our childhood was spent studying and playing with fellow students and neighborhood friends, most of whom were also of immigrant parents, Irish, Greek, Italian and French Canadian. With my father, I attended Wednesday Novenas of Our Lady of Perpetual Help at the Basilica, attended by Redemptorists, where I came to know St. Alphonsus Maria of Liguori. I studied for 12 years with the Sisters of Notre Dame de Namour, whom

I admired as intelligent, professional and dedicated women (but perhaps from another planet).



As an elementary school teacher in the inner-city of



Boston, my students were mainly Spanish speaking. I decided to take a sabbatical from the Boston Public Schools and went to Puerto Rico to study Spanish, first at the University of San Juan and then in the summer took an intensive course where I met and stayed with IHM Sisters in Ponce. Returning to Boston, I taught several years in the bilingual program and kept in contact with the IHMs in Puerto Rico, whose dedication and closeness to the life of the people I admired. On returning to Puerto Rico, I worked for three years with IHM Sisters and then asked to enter the community. I was accepted by Margaret Brennan, who approved that my formation

could be in Puerto Rico in the newly formed Intercongregational Formation Program. After first profession, I spent 15 years in pastoral work in Ceiba and Vieques.

In a meeting of our Mission Group "Caminhando Cantando," Julie Slowik requested another IHM to accompany a young woman, Carmen Armenta Lara, in her possible IHM entrance in Mexico. Carmen's formation took place in Mexico, Puerto Rico and Michigan. Several years later, after a close relation with IHMs, Maria Antonia Aranda Diaz requested to enter the Congregation and I accompanied her journey. We moved to the Santa Elena Chapel, where I have served for 26 years and in Mexico, 34 years.

Since 2018, with the large caravans of migrants from Central, South America, etc., we have been accompanying our migrant brothers and sisters on their journey to a better life. We help them with health issues, education, documents, work possibilities, housing and spiritual accompaniment. Our presence with migrants is supported by the Civil Association, Planting Today and Harvesting Tomorrow, A.C., and the Intercongregational Community of five Congregations of Women Religious.

It seems that my life has come full circle from my childhood and my Irish roots as I share my IHM presence with our migrant families in Juarez. Gracias a Dios for my 50 IHM years!