

Kay Louise (John Catherine) Aerts

I grew up on a farm in Elbridge Township, Michigan, with my two brothers and two sisters. I loved participating in 4-H projects,



everything from homemaking to raising, training and showing cows and calves. After graduating from Hart High School, I attended Aquinas College in Grand Rapids. It was my pastor who first introduced me to the IHM



Sisters. After a year at Aquinas, I decided to join the community. I earned my bachelor's degree from Marygrove College while substitute teaching in IHM schools.



My first permanent teaching assignment was at St. Anne School in Warren, Michigan. I taught sixth grade for my first year, then taught math and music to seventh and eighth graders for the next three years. I professed my final vows at the end of that school year and received my permanent

elementary certification that fall. From St. Anne, I went on to teach seventh grade math and music at Our Lady Star of the Sea in Grosse Pointe Woods while pursuing my master's degree in education at Marygrove. After a year, I moved to St. Charles Borromeo in Detroit, where I taught seventh and eighth grades and the following year, fifth and sixth grades.

I then joined the faculty at East Catholic High School in Detroit, where I taught ninth and tenth grade

math. I earned my master's degree in 1970 and my permanent secondary certification the following year.

Soon after, I began ministering with the Detroit Board of Education's Cass Outreach, preparing adults for their GED exams. At the same time, I pursued my love of music by studying voice at Marygrove and taking music courses at Henry Ford Community College and Wayne State University. I also served as song leader at SS. Simon and Jude.

After a year with Cass Outreach, I became music director at St. Thomas Aquinas in Detroit while also teaching algebra at Henry Ford Community College. I later returned to the Detroit Board of Education, where I taught adult education, pre-GED, GED and choral classes. I also taught algebra and choral classes at Wayne County Community College. I even directed a singing class at the Trinidad Recreation Center and, for one semester, taught a GED class for the Dearborn Board of Education.

All told, I ministered with the Detroit Board of Education for nearly 40 years before retiring in 2009. In 1990, I started helping to improve the lives of cats and dogs in my Detroit neighborhood. Over time, that effort grew beyond my neighborhood. Since June 2010, I've served as director of the Fortunate Feline Adoption League, an organization devoted to addressing cat overpopulation and homelessness.