

IHM Sisters - Then and Now

December 2008



Sister Ruth (Helen Ann) Glaser taught for 18 years, certified to teach all grades from three through eight. But when she obtained her educational specialist degree from Wayne State University, she knew she had found her niche in counseling.

Wayne Dyer worked as a counselor at Mercy High School and on staff at Wayne State University when Sister Ruth did her internship with him. She learned from one of the best.

Her counseling experience led her to serve as chaplain at Harper Hospital, Rehabilitation Institute, Bon Secours Hospital, at Mercy Memorial Hospital and finally at St. Mary Health Care Center and the IHM Motherhouse.

While working at Bon Secours, she recalls telling her team that religious life is a model for the world. "We bring Christ to people at a point in their life when they need religious support and encouragement."

Sister Ruth remembers from her years as chaplain, "Even when dealing with death, the family would open up to you and thank you for being there to help them through that experience."

Sister Ruth says she has experienced several "firsts" in her lifetime. She belonged to the first graduating class from Immaculata High School. She was the first IHM to become a chaplain as well as the first to be a certified chaplain and supervisor. She also served as the first IHM certified chaplain in the Motherhouse.

She admits to having been deeply influenced by the homilies and little books written by her close friend Bishop Ken Untener. "He taught that our whole life should be centered around love. That by showing love to everybody, my life will change and so will theirs. He also taught that you can't say you love God if you don't love your neighbor."

Sister Ruth is an active prayer minister. She reads the prayer board daily and prays for every child she ever taught and for every person she ever worked with. She recalls that when she was teaching, she wasn't aware of the problems or suffering of the children she taught. It wasn't until she became a school guidance counselor that she became aware of the many problems they brought to school with them each day.

Her current ministry includes volunteering in Pastoral Care; sending birthday cards to employees and collecting Mass stipends for anybody that wants a Mass.



Sister Ruth is reading Joan Chittester's book, *The Gift of Years*. The book reminds her that "We don't change as we get older. We just get to be more of what we always were."