

## IHM Sisters - Then and Now

January 2010



**Sister Ann Christine Charron, IHM**, was the 12<sup>th</sup> of 13 children. When she was 17 months old, her mother died in childbirth, and Sister Ann Christine and one of her sisters were raised by her aunt.

Her aunt also cared for other children and older adults in need. Sister Ann Christine made a promise to herself when she was a child – to care for other people as her aunt cared for her.

She considered becoming a nurse, but Sister Ann Christine was inspired by her IHM teachers at Holy Cross School in Marine City, Mich., and by the Rev. John Hogan, a priest at Holy Cross, to enter the IHM community.

Her first ministry as an IHM Sister began in 1948 teaching second and third grades at Christ the King School in Detroit, where she taught for more than six years. She spent a year at St. Patrick School, Carleton (where she taught a class of 69 third- and fourth-graders). Sister Ann Christine spent three years teaching at St. Michael, Monroe and two years at St. Thomas, Ann Arbor before ministering for three years in Puerto Rico, teaching grade four for two years and grade six for a year. Following her return from Puerto Rico, Sister Ann Christine taught first seventh grade and then eighth grade at St. Mark, Cleveland.



“Those were probably the nicest classes ever,” she laughs, “because there were only about 30 students in them!”

For five years, Sister Ann Christine served as principal at St. Michael the Archangel, Miami (where she mentored singer Gloria Estefan). The same Rev. Hogan who encouraged her call to religious life contacted her to ask a favor. He was responsible for the Marydale Center, a retirement home in Port Huron, Mich. Would she be willing to spend her summers working at Marydale so the director could make her retreat and go on vacation?

Sister Ann Christine agreed. After spending four summers working at Marydale, she became first the co-director and then the administrator. She ministered full time at the center for 30 years and lived at Marydale after retirement.



Although “retirement” is misleading. Sister Ann Christine served as pastoral minister at St. Mary Parish in Port Huron for five years while living at Marydale. She also cared for several residents who had no family.

Sister Ann Christine moved to the IHM Motherhouse in March 2009.

“I’ve enjoyed every minute I’ve had working with people, especially all the different people who crossed my path at Marydale,” she says. “I’m grateful for the loving hand of God showing me where he wanted me to serve him.”