



Remembering Sister Mary Frances Hogan Aug. 9, 1919 – Dec. 15, 2010

Sr. Mary Fran Hogan will surely be remembered as a woman religious who loved life, her family and her IHM community where she was dearly appreciated. As teacher and principal, she instilled confidence in her students, whom she aimed to educate to be articulate Christian citizens. She is credited with having made significant contributions in both the educational field and within civic society.

Mary Frances Hogan was born on Aug. 9, 1919, on St. Clair Avenue on Detroit's east side. Her parents were John Joseph Hogan from County Galway, Ireland, and Catherine (Killeen) Hogan from County Clare. Mary Fran was the eldest of three children born to John and Catherine. She had one brother, Joe, and a sister, Elizabeth.

The Hogan's were a closely knit family. Both parents came from families of 12, so there were many aunts, uncles and cousins with whom to celebrate when holidays came up. Sometimes they visited the homes of other relatives. At other times they enjoyed picnics on Belle Isle in Detroit, or Peer Park in Grosse Pointe.

The family belonged to Annunciation Parish, and both her mother and dad took active roles in parish activities: the Altar Society, the St. Vincent de Paul Society, and the Capuchin Soup Kitchen on Mt. Elliott. The church was the center of their lives.

Mary Frances attended Howe School for kindergarten and first grade. From second grade onward, she was a student at Annunciation School. There, along with her brother and sister she received, as Mary Fran stated, "a marvelous education from great IHM teachers, such as Sisters Georgetta, Benedetta, and Robertine."

Upon graduation from her senior year in high school in 1936, Mary Fran entered the IHM community. She was received into the Novitiate in Jan. 1937, and given the name of Sr. Laurencine. However, in May 1938, she contracted a serious strep infection and was sent home.

After several months Mary Fran was restored to fine health and chose to enter Marygrove College. Her four years at Marygrove proved to be a special time of growth and learning. Majoring in English and gaining a minor in history and science, she developed lasting friendships with some of her teachers, Miss Robb, head of the English Department, and Sisters Ann Chester, Rosalita, Theodosia and Vincent de Paul just to mention a few.

After Graduation, Mary Fran was hired immediately to teach in the Detroit Public Schools. She took pleasure in saying that the job opportunity happened so easily because Sr. Florence Louise endorsed her! Shortly afterward, however, she decided to re-enter the IHM congregation, which she did on July 2, 1942. The following January she once again became a Novice, receiving the name Sr. Christiana. Sister made her final profession as an IHM Sister in January 1948.

Sr. Christiana (Mary Fran) always insisted that she had been on the "best missions in the world." In all her years in the schools, she was an active and vibrant faculty member. She taught at St. John's in Canton, Ohio, and continued at Immaculata High School in Detroit, St. Mary Academy in Monroe, Immaculate Heart

of Mary in Westchester, Ill., Gabriel Richard High School in Riverview, and Marian High School in Bloomfield Hills, Mich.

In each place she loved teaching, found each day challenging and exciting, and always had the ability to awaken interest, enthusiasm, and creativity in her students. Mary Fran appreciated the many educational and social opportunities that the community had offered her. She believed that these had well prepared her to challenge the hundreds of students who sat in her classrooms over the years.

In 1972, a very special honor was awarded to this talented educator. Mayor Ted Bates of Warren, Mich., proclaimed June 5 as "Sister Christiana Day." *The Macomb Daily* ran the headline: "**Sister Christiana Lauded for Service to Warren Schools.**" As principal of St. Anne's High School, sister was one of the framers of a shared-time educational experience in Warren that won renown. Students in this shared-time high school spent half their day at St. Anne's taking social sciences, biology, English and Christian formation courses. In the other half, they attended Warren High School or Furhmann Junior High for languages, math and technical courses.

A testimonial dinner on the evening of June 5 honored sister as an outstanding person and educator. Proceeds from the dinner established a scholarship for students who wished to attend St. Anne but found it difficult to meet the fees of a parochial school.

Mary Fran was highly motivated in whatever activity she took on. In one of her Mission Commitment Forms she indicated that it was her love of prayer and Eucharist, of Christ and His Redeeming Mission, together with her desires for social justice for all in a democratic society that inspired her to do the things she did as an IHM educator.

In another Commitment Form she highlighted the fact that she saw her ministry as a U. S. government teacher as definitely an occasion of concretizing the Good News. Next to religion, she saw the teaching of social studies as an opportunity for instilling the truth, the beauty and love that America stands for into the minds of her students. She credited summer theology workshops for deeply affecting her as she studied new age science, cosmology and ecology and world religions. Her realization and love for creation in and around her widened and deepened.

In 1989 Sister Christiana, Mary Frances Hogan, retired to the Motherhouse in Monroe. Desiring to be of service in Motherhouse activities, she soon became a eucharistic minister and lector at liturgies. She served as retreat coordinator for the Motherhouse Resident Community (MRC), and as a member of the IHM Coordinating Council. Widening her interests to the City of Monroe, she was a member of the Monroe Historical Society, the Monroe Council of Churches, and the Monroe City Charter Commission. "I love what I am doing 'at home' and in Monroe," she declared. "There is nothing dull, morbid or unexciting here!"

A sudden heart attack while at her sister Liz's home in 1993 hospitalized Mary Fran for a while, but after a long and tedious recovery she continued to keep informed of current events via newspapers, magazines and TV. She ably discussed major national and local issues with IHMs and family. She responded by mail to her representatives in Congress, and she faithfully prayed for her IHM community, her city, state and her "dear USA -- its Congress and President" that peace and justice be soon a reality throughout the world.

Mary Fran was ever appreciative of people. She often stated that she stood on the shoulders of many wonderful people. She credited her parents for inspiring her with their faith and love of God, love of neighbors and their respect for learning. Reading, writing, spelling and arithmetic were as much a part of home as of school.

Mary Fran, you have had a long, eventful, and productive life. As you have loved us and so many others, we have welcomed and responded to your warmth and love. We shall surely miss you.

You have shown a spirit of joy, love and enthusiasm for your life here in your earthly home. May you enter with the same free spirit into the Holy Mystery of the Eternal Life which now opens to you. Be at peace, and know that we will not forget you.

Written by Marie Gatza, IHM
December 20, 2010