

Then & Now

Sister Jane Mary Howard



Sister Jane Mary Howard lost both her mother and father during the 1918 influenza outbreak when she was almost 3 years. She and her 1-year old brother went to live in Adrian with their grandmother.

She attended St. Mary's grade school and high school in Adrian, and one year at Siena Heights College. When her grandmother died, she found work in downtown Detroit and attended the University of Detroit at night.

About this time, all her friends were getting married and she began thinking about religious life. As a small child she had thought about it,

too. In 1936 Jane Mary became an IHM.

Sister Jane Mary started teaching in 1937, first at St. Mary Monroe; St. Philip in Battle Creek; and St. Mary Academy. She went to Catholic University of America in Washington, D.C., where she received a master's degree and her doctorate. In 1959, she received a fellowship to study the social and economic conditions of Haiti.



Sister Jane Mary (center, in novitiate), with her aunts.

“What a life-changing experience that was!” she said. “There was terrible poverty in Haiti even then.”



In 1965 she spent the summer in Israel with Sister Juliana Bruin as part of the Wings for Wisdom project. “That was a great opportunity, to see the problems and different levels of development in that country.”

Sister Jane Mary wrote an article that was published in the magazine *America* and appeared on a local TV program to speak of her experiences.

She taught at Marygrove College for 26 years. In 1968 she served as acting president for one-and-a-half years at Marygrove College, when Sister Mary Emil left to work on the Sister Formation movement. She then took a sabbatical for a year and was a visiting scholar at Stanford University.

Sister Jane Mary also ministered at Siena Heights College, Western Michigan University, Weston School of Theology, and as a volunteer at St. Regis Parish. In 2001 she moved to Monroe and in 2003 moved into the Motherhouse.

These days life has slowed down a bit. She is still actively serving the congregation by working in the Service Office Monday through Friday. She finds time to read - some of her favorites are the *New York Times* and the *New Yorker* magazine. She is currently reading *The Elegance of the Hedgehog*, by Muriel Barbery.

