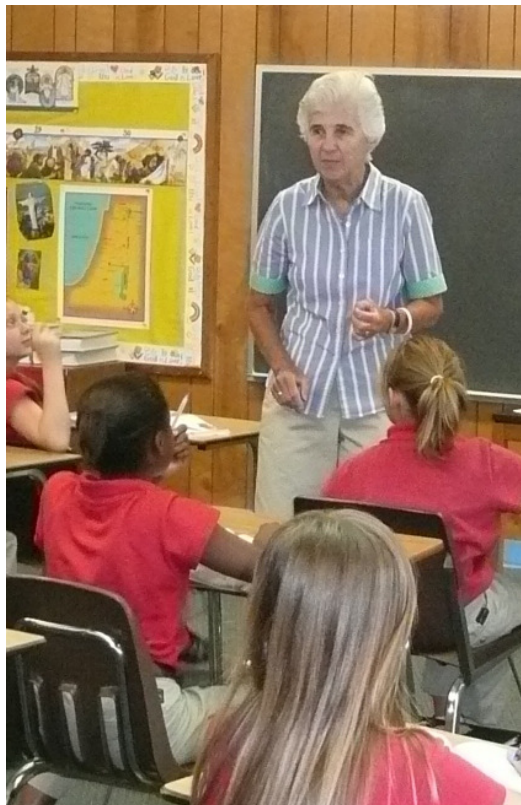


IHMs IN ACTION



This past school year, Sister Brigid Wade, IHM, taught religion at St. Ambrose School in Deerfield Beach, Fla.

Previous ministries have taken her to schools in the Detroit area, as well as to California ("I had never even been on a plane when I was sent to California!" she recalls) and Florida.

And then in the late 1960s, one of the sisters who had entered the IHM community with Sister Brigid asked her to go with her to minister in Oklahoma as a teacher. "I stayed for 20 years," Sister Brigid recalls, "coming back to Detroit during the summer to attend Wayne State University for my master's degree in elementary counseling."

Once she earned her master's degree, Sister Brigid served as both teacher and counselor at schools in and around Oklahoma City.

In 1989, Sister Brigid's mother was legally blind and in failing health. Sister Brigid moved to Florida to take care of her while also working full time at St. Elizabeth School as the elementary counselor and religion teacher.

Sister Brigid stayed at St. Elizabeth until it closed last year and began teaching four religion classes at St. Ambrose in the fall of 2010. She was also put in charge of school liturgies.

"There's so much drama in the Gospels for children to act out," she notes. "It really gets them involved."

Sister Brigid utilizes a variety of methods in her classes, including prayer, reading Scripture and meditation.

"I love teaching religion," she says. "Grades three, four and five are the molding years, so I like to catch them young. Seeing kids *want* to read Scripture and get excited is very rewarding. I've grown so much with them, and I pray their relationship with the Lord grows.

"It's difficult to not know what the ultimate effect of my teaching is," Sister Brigid notes quietly. "You rely on God, go in, do your best and hope to make a difference in someone's life."

Student feedback suggests Sister Brigid's effect on students *has* made a difference, and she frequently hears from her students thanking her for something she said or did that touched their lives. A fifth-grade boy told her he loves coming to religion class, and a former student wrote, "The most influential person in my faith was Sister Brigid."

A minor heart attack convinced Sister Brigid to slow down a bit.

"I started teaching in 1960, and I haven't stopped," she laughs. "I always wanted to be a good teacher – my heart and soul are in it. Now I'm waiting to see what my next ministry will be. Where does God want me?"