

IHM^s IN ACTION



How Can I Keep From Singing is more than a hymn for Sister Maria Theresa (Cecilia Mary) Magrie, IHM. It is the theme of her life.

Sister Maria is the music minister for St. Vincent DePaul Parish in Pontiac, Mich., a position she's held for the last 12 years. She is also a composer, teacher and choir director.

"I owe it all to my parents," Sister Maria says. "My mother was a gifted singer, and my dad could play the piano by ear. I'm grateful God has let me share this gift."

"Sharing her gift" has taken many forms for Sister Maria. She was a classroom music teacher at several elementary schools, taught voice at Marygrove College and choral at Immaculata High School, Detroit, and Marian and Brother Rice high schools in Bloomfield Hills, Mich. When she was head of the music department at Immaculate Heart of Mary High School (IHM), Westchester, Ill., her chorale was invited by Delta Records to record two albums. She has directed choirs of

both children and adults.

For five seasons, Sister Maria shared her gift with Detroit Red Wings fans at Joe Louis Arena, singing the national anthems of both the United States and Canada before games as well as singing at Tigers' and Pistons' games. She has been asked to sing at weddings and funerals and even sang for composer Aaron Copeland, performing several of his songs. She received the prestigious Steinway Award in 1969. The award cited the "outstanding contributions she has made to the cause of music."

She also has numerous compositions to her credit, including school songs for Marian, Brother Rice and IHM, liturgical music, such as antiphons for the seasons of the liturgical year, and Masses. *African-American Mass for a New Tomorrow* was inspired by her multi-cultural parish work.

"Being part of a multi-cultural parish has been a source of constant learning and joy in bringing culture alive through communal celebration in the liturgies we do," Sister Maria explains. She has also written Masses of joy, peace, hope, thanksgiving and a Mass in honor of St. Vincent DePaul.

"I've always been creative and able to compose," Sister Maria says. "I'd love to publish my music one day, but in the meantime, I know I've been deeply blessed. I'm using the gifts God has given me, and I find no greater joy than sharing those gifts with others."