

IHM Sisters Then & Now

Sister Jane Arthur Duffy – May 2012



Sister Jane Arthur was born in 1928 in Jackson, Mich. She had four brothers and two sisters. Shortly after completing the 11th grade in 1945, she entered the IHM community.

She started her teaching ministry in 1948 at St. Charles Borromeo in Detroit. Her other assignments were at St. Patrick, Wyandotte; St. John, Jackson; Our Lady of Lourdes, River Rouge; Holy Trinity, Detroit; and for 32 years at Holy Redeemer, Detroit.

After spending the first 12 years teaching in Detroit and Wyandotte, she remembered how excited she was to receive her next assignment. As was customary with the IHMs, she was going to be assigned to a different city that year to teach. She picked up her assignment papers and sat in the back of the chapel to read them. She yelled out, “My God, it *can't* be - but it is!” Her new assignment was her hometown of Jackson at St. John! The sisters sitting in the chapel all turned around to see what caused the commotion.



Sister Jane Arthur recalled a proud moment when she attended the ordination of one of her former students, Jim Arsenault, “He was a student of mine at St. Patrick Wyandotte. We kept in touch and years later he invited me to attend his ordination.” She and three other IHM Sisters attended the ceremony and his first Mass in Philadelphia.

In the early 1990s, Sister Regina Mary Affholter founded the GEM (Getting Educationally Motivated) program at Holy Redeemer where Sister Jane Arthur was teaching. This is a tutoring program where students receive one-on-one help to motivate them to do better in school. The program also gives individualized attention to advanced students so they can learn at their own pace. After spending 23 years in the traditional classroom, Sister Jane Arthur devoted the next 10 years to this special classroom experience.

“I remember a young man from a small village in South America who was in the GEM program. A kerosene lantern exploded in his face and left him permanently scarred from the burns. The children accepted him and made him feel welcome there,” she recalled. “He got very good at playing the game Concentration on the computer and always beat me! After he graduated from school, he came back and tutored other students in this program.”

Sister Regina Mary died in December 2011, but the program continues to thrive. Sister Elizabeth Fleckenstein still ministers at Holy Redeemer.

Some of her favorite summertime memories were spent at Wamplers Lake in Michigan at a cottage owned by Sister Regina Mary's family. A bus would bring a load of sisters out to spend the day relaxing, swimming and picnicking on the beach. Sometimes there would be rides in the pontoon boat. There was always a lot of fun.

In 2003 Sister Jane Arthur retired from teaching and moved to the Motherhouse. Here she found many ways to help out. She brings communion to Health Care residents twice a week; she sorts incoming mail and passes it out to the residents; she works in the Opportunity Shop when it's open twice a week but also sorts items as they come in; and she acts as a greeter at funerals.

But she also takes time to have fun. She enjoys jigsaw puzzles and listening to music. She and several sisters get together weekly to play Rummikub, euchre and Michigan Rummy (for pennies).

