



Sister Judy, pictured second from right with her parents and siblings

Sister Judith Coyle was taught by IHM sisters from elementary school through high school in Flint, Mich. Her family knew the IHM sisters well, and having had a strong sense of vocation since she was 12, she joined the community after high school.

Sister Judy says her vocation arose from the tragic death of her older cousin. She

realized she “needed to be about something that was ultimate. The kind of ultimacy of religious life brought me here.” She was drawn to the lifestyle and wanted to give her life to God.

She found formation very fulfilling. The religious instructions and studies, the prayer and companionship as well as the music, made these years very rewarding. Sister Judy says the music especially “made coming to religious life full and beautiful in many ways.” She fondly recalls the beautifully arranged music sung by more than 100 young voices directed by Sister Alphonsus Mary. After Vatican II, the sisters “sang a new song” as they “threw over the organ and picked up the guitar.”

Sister Judy began her ministries at St. Charles in Newport, Mich., where she taught seventh and eighth grades. From there she taught grades four and five at St. Joseph in Monroe; after the school closed, she stayed to serve in parish ministry. She then went to St. Charles, Coldwater, Mich., serving in parish ministry before becoming the liturgist at St. Martin de Porres Parish in Warren, Mich. During the summers, she completed her master’s degree in liturgy from Notre Dame University.

When Sr. Mary Jo Maher asked her to serve in South Africa, Sister Judy had no desire to go, but during a retreat, she had a life-altering conversion, what she describes as “a call within a call.”

After two years of preparation, she went to South Africa where she ministered at St. Joseph Parish in Howick and collaborated with the Redemptorists in the formation of their students. For 19 years, she taught seminarians at St. Joseph Theological Institute. During that time, Sister Judy earned her doctorate in spirituality at the University of South Africa where she taught before serving at the newly established St. Augustine College in Johannesburg, her ministry for nine years. Currently, Sister Judy is the acting head of the Theology



Department. Along with her administrative duties and teaching responsibilities, she is helping to re-establish the undergraduate programs cut in 2013.

Sister Judy feels fortunate to have always lived in community, with IHM's and other sisters as well. Their daily prayer, company and encouragement have sustained her in ministry and she is grateful for their support.

She never imagined that she would be living in South Africa. "It has only been possible because of the community and the vision of those women who called us to something we never could have imagined on our own."



(From left) Vincent Morare, Dr. Jakub Urbaniak, Lorraine Mandini, Rev. Fritz Hank, Sister Judith Coyle, Caroline Raphael, Joanne Tatalias and Joanna Burek



Sisters Sue Rakoczy, Judith Coyle, Annette St. Amour, Peg O'Shea and Marie Esther Hafflett