

Sister Joan Helm SSND - 70 Year Jubilee!



"I am deeply grateful to God for having guided me to enter our international congregation and live the charism of Blessed Theresa."

I was taught by the SSNDs in both elementary and high school. I knew in my heart that I had a vocation to religious life and I wanted to be a teacher. After Grade 12, I entered the candidature in Waterdown, ON and studied Grade 13 at Notre Dame Academy. I was received as Novice Albert Marie in 1952 and professed my vows in 1953.

Following graduation from Hamilton Teacher's College, I taught at the elementary and secondary levels and was principal as well.

I attained my B.A. from McMaster University, Hamilton and M.Ed. from Ottawa University. From 1979 to 1983 I was missioned as headmistress in convent schools in Crowborough and Lingfield, England.

When I retired from classroom teaching, I accepted a position as academic counsellor at an adult education centre. I was privileged to assist unemployed who had to upgrade their education; also, highly educated immigrants who had to take specific courses to qualify for professional status in Canada.

In the summer of 1977 I participated in the Global Awareness Program learning about our SSND ministries in Honduras and Guatemala. This experience taught me to be more frugal in my personal life. In the summer of 1992, I had the wonderful opportunity to live with our sisters in Japan and teach English to college students.

My great desire to visit Mother Theresa's grave in Munich, Germany was realized in January, 2000 as a participant of the Millennium International Program. Interacting with SSNDs from other provinces was very enriching. After the program a few of us visited SSNDs in the Italian Province and toured the Vatican. In 2002 I was appointed as archivist of our Canadian province. Currently, I am heritage co-ordinator in Waterdown, ON.

As I reflect on my 70 years as a religious, I am deeply grateful to God for having guided me to enter our international congregation and live the charism of Blessed Theresa.