

2012 Jubilee



First Profession
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JUBILEE WISDOM

God blesses us.

God calls us.

God watches over us.

-Christyn Willems, SSND

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60 Years

Sister Christyn describes her ministries as an educator in the text, below.

Now that I have reached 60 years in religious life,

it is important to examine how God has blessed me during this time. God called me to follow him when I was in high school, but even though He was drawing me to Himself in such a special way, I did not have the courage to take the step to enter. I worked four years in the business world. Here God watched over me by having two men with whom I worked mention that they thought I should be a sister. I was shocked. After that I attended Mount Mary College for three years. Through Mary's intervention, I finally entered at the end of my junior year.

After graduation from Mount Mary, I taught business subjects

and religion on the high school level for 21 years. I spent one year at Messmer in Milwaukee, five years at the Academy of Our Lady in Chicago, seven years at Catholic Central in Fort Wayne, Indiana and eight years at Central Catholic in Marinette, Wisconsin. I loved teaching teenagers. I remember one day in Marinette, when I was teaching bookkeeping to mostly boys, writing a transaction on the board. My student who rarely did his homework called out, "Sister, you made a mistake!" To my surprise, I put a debit in place of the credit and vice versa. I said, "Jim, you are really on the ball today," and proceeded to make the correction. Jim did his homework every day after that.

In 1972, I was called to Mount Mary College

as I had recently received my master's degree at the University of Detroit. After one year, I was asked to become the interim registrar of the two campuses, Mankato and Mount Mary, until they found a replacement. After four years, I served as chairperson of the Business Administration Department. Later, I became Coordinator of Business Education. That was a wonderful position as I loved training teachers for certification from K-12. I always encouraged them to be role models for their students and to get involved in business organizations. In 1999 I was surprised to be honored as the Wisconsin Business Education Association's Outstanding Post Secondary Business Teacher of the Year Award.

After my father died in 1985, I went home every weekend to Kenosha

for 15 years to help my mother. After she died at 101, I received a request to teach for three hours on Saturdays in the "Mount Mary College in the Community" program at the Milwaukee Achiever site. I truly enjoyed teaching computer and communication skills so students could obtain the skills to enter the business world, be promoted, or attend college.

In 2010 after 38 years at Mount Mary and turning 85,

I decided to retire from teaching at Mount Mary and the Mount Mary College in the Community Program. This was a hard decision as I loved teaching. However, I am grateful to be at Notre Dame of Elm Grove.