

## CSA JUBILARIAN 2017

**Name of Jubilarian:** Mary Noel Brown

In reflecting on the reality of jubilee and my life as a woman religious, I am deeply aware that *“all is gift from a loving God.”* CSA, family, friends, those with whom I minister, the Franciscan Sisters of Christian Charity, my life experiences – all are gifts from a loving God.

A native Michigander, I was born and grew up in Petoskey, a small town in the northern part of the lower peninsula. The oldest of seven, my first playmates were my siblings and cousins. My stay-at-home-mom was a consummate juggler of everything family as she tended to the needs of our growing family. My dad was car dealer who volunteered extensively in all things athletic at St. Francis High School.

At age 18, I had no idea where my life’s journey would take me or how rich my life in community would be. I joined the Franciscan Sisters of Christian Charity, the only religious congregation I knew and my teachers throughout grade and high school. As a postulant, I studied at Silver Lake College in Manitowoc and, a few years later after taking my first vows, transferred to Alverno College in Milwaukee, where I received a degree in nursing. Later I earned a master’s degree in nursing administration at Indiana University.

My ministry in health care took me to hospitals in Wisconsin, Nebraska, Ohio and back to Wisconsin where I had rich opportunities as a staff nurse, instructor at a diploma school of nursing, vice-president of nursing, and mission officer. I currently serve as the executive leader of sponsorship for CSA, a ministry in which I am enriched and blessed beyond description by all those with whom I minister in sponsorship and in the institutional ministries sponsored by the congregation

I am grateful to God for all the sisters with whom I have lived and ministered, the opportunities and surprises, and the unexpected twists and turns of my life. The biggest unexpected twist came when I realized a call to another religious congregation. A very difficult yet very graced decision led me to CSA in 2000.

Celebrating my jubilee represents a significant passage in my life and it marks the deepening of relationships with my God, my CSA community, my family and friends. Celebrating my jubilee is also an immeasurable gift. I realize more, with each passing day, that *“there are so many gifts still unopened from my birthday. There are so many hand-crafted presents that have been sent to me by God.”* (Hafiz) I look forward to what is to be with joy!