

## CSA JUBILARIAN 2017

**Name of Jubilarian:** Mary Rose Obholz

**Name of Birthplace/Hometown:** Buffalo, NY/Hays, KS

**Education: Schools/colleges/universities attended and degrees received:**

Marian College, Fond du Lac, WI – B.S. Elementary Education

Cardinal Stritch College, Milwaukee, WI – M.A. Teaching of Reading

Clarke College, Dubuque, IA – Certification in Learning Disability

**Please name the places where you have ministered; if possible, list years. If you were a teacher, please name the parish or school, location, dates, and grade levels taught:**

1967-89 Catholic Elementary Schools –Grades 1-8  
(Wisconsin, Michigan, Illinois, Indiana, Alabama)  
1989-92 Truman College, Chicago, IL – ESL  
1992-96 Bolivar Co. Literacy Council, Mississippi – Coordinator  
1997-2007 Imani Wellness Center, Indianola, MS  
2008-10 Milwaukee Achiever Program, Milwaukee, WI  
2010-present Bisbee, AZ – Border Ministry

*Share a story about a time, an event, or an experience in your vowed life that affirms or speaks to your lifelong commitment as a vowed woman religious.*

*Share what it means to you to be celebrating jubilee in CSA and in the global Church.*

*Share a poem, a prayer, a reflection that has captured for you, the story of your journey in religious life.*

### ONE STORY OF MISSION

I have journeyed to many places and have been present to people whose faith life and human dignity have been threatened and I have to say at times destroyed. For sixteen years my life as a vowed member was deeply immersed in the Mississippi Delta. This connected me to the dedication of the people. It was about being present and that continues wherever I am. I loved my years of teaching in Elementary Schools and those experiences moved me to a new and different way of being present. The love connection no matter what the language continues to move me. So here is the story I want to share, not so much my story, but the story of some of the migrant people (refugees).

I share this because the streamlining process has so deeply affected me and has changed me. I don't want to judge or shame others – only ask questions of myself and pray that others support and love – truly love the migrants who are our brothers and sisters.

As I entered the second floor courtroom of the Federal Building in Tucson, I saw about seventy people to the left. They were Mexicans, Guatemalans, Hondurans, and Nicaraguans. There were about fifteen women and the rest men, some very young. All were shackled both hands and feet; all accused of entering the United States illegally. To the right were their accusers and in the front was a judge who read the charges as eight stood in front of him and with the advice of counsel pleaded guilty. This is called streamlining for a reason. My heart broke as I saw each group shuffle out and continue to be replaced by another eight until all seventy had seen their “day in court.” I thought of Jesus as he was condemned and led away. What I was led to believe about our system of justice was destroyed within me that day. My heart cries out for justice and mercy. The

whole system is broken and then I think have we always been this way? I am so sad because we speak of the best country in the world and we believe we can play at being God.

And the question is, "Were you, Jesus, in that courtroom? I do believe you stood with the accused. And you were powerless and the one language cried out you are guilty. And I, like Peter, wanted to scream out just as he did with the sword. But that's the violence I abhor.

And I keep thinking if I'm not part of the solution, I'm part of the problem. And violence breeds violence. One of the questions continues to be: Do I just stand silent as I see the humiliation of people? What can I be for the people? My God, I feel a sense of powerlessness – I feel a sense of shame. What is the answer? One thing I know – this I know – I do not carry the burden alone. Where am I in the courtroom? Am I the judge who reads the charges and asks are you guilty or not guilty? Am I the prosecutor who presents the migrants? Am I the attorney who recommends pleading guilty? Am I the silent bystander? Or am I one of the Samaritans who reaches out and binds up the wounds of the broken hearted?