

Name of Jubilarian: Sister Mary Dennis McMahon

Name of Birthplace/Hometown: Chicago, Illinois

Education, schools attended, and degrees received:

Marian College, Fond du Lac, Wisconsin – BS in El. Education
Fordham University, New York – MA in Elementary Ed.
DePaul University, Chicago, IL &
Manhattan College, New York – enough credits for 2nd MA in Administration

Overview of positions held, locations, and dates where Sister Mary Dennis has ministered:

1949-1950, Sacred Heart, Yonkers, New York – 2nd grade teacher
1950-1951, St. Mary's, Nanty Glo, Pennsylvania – 1st grade teacher
1951-1956, St. Nicholas, Evanston, IL – 1st & 2nd grades teacher
1956-1960, Holy Family, Bronx, New York – 1st & 2nd grades
1960-1963, Sacred Heart, Yonkers, New York – 5th & 6th grades
1963-1969, St. Zachary, Des Plaines, Illinois - Principal
1969-1975, St. Nicholas, Evanston, Illinois – Principal
1975-1979, Sacred Heart High School, Yonkers, New York – Co-Principal with Christian Brother
1979-1980, Presentation, N. Fond du Lac, Wisconsin – 6th & 7th grades
1980-1982, Ft. Wayne/South Bend Diocesan Office of Catholic Ed, Indiana – Associate Superintendent- Opened office in South Bend
1982-1987, Beloit Catholic High School, Beloit, WI – Principal
1987-1988, St. Mary's Crown Point, IN – Librarian/Sub Teacher-all grades
1988-1993, St. Joseph's Elementary, Chicago, IL – Principal/served students from Cabrini Green Project
1993-2000, St. Thomas of Canterbury (Immigrant Parish School) Chicago, IL – Associate Principal
2001-2005, near St. Thomas of Canterbury, Chicago, IL - Child care of 2 African American infants adopted by St. Thomas Principal – began with each child at 3 days old
2005 Retired to Nazareth Court & Center (due to ill health 2003/2004 in Chicago)

Thoughts on Religious Life:

How does one capture 63 years of life that has been joyous beyond all expectations in a few words?

The first three years of formation barely introduced you to the essential elements of a consecrated life, as a religious, and in particular, as a Sister of St. Agnes. It just whetted the interest and desire to be a worthy religious woman.

Then you were professed, and beginning to live the vows, especially obedience. Go to New York and teach! I loved teaching from the very beginning. Actually, it was the children I loved. And in the beginning, I had the privilege of preparing small children for the sacraments of Penance and First Communion. Again in obedience, I returned to school – well really – we always seemed to be “going to School,” when we weren't

teaching, but this was to earn a Masters in my favorite area – Elementary Education at Fordham University in New York. Leadership in CSA believed in the Community being very capable, professionally, whether we worked in health care or in education. It was the living of our vow of poverty that permitted the use of our stipends, our income, for furthering our education.

I hadn't counted on the MA earned as a step toward Administration, but the Community had, so now obedience says, "Go open a brand new school" in Des Plaines, Illinois. I was terrified!

Prayer, and life in Community with your Sisters, who are wiser and more experienced, help us to meet what may seem like an insurmountable challenge.

And so the years pass quickly. You meet the Lord frequently visible in your Sisters, in Community living, the teachers and students in many places, with varying backgrounds, and the laity, many of whom exemplify the Lord's life to remind you, He is indeed everywhere, calling us to GROW TOGETHER in love and devoted services, even as He showed us when He walked among us and still does!

What are my feelings on this 60th anniversary? Deep gratitude to God for His invitation to the consecrated, vowed life of a religious, and particularly, to the life of a Sister of St. Agnes. I am humbly grateful for a life that has had more joy than sorrow, more opportunities for a most happy professional life as a Catholic educator, and more opportunities to interact with heroically generous people who have taught me to recognize Jesus in odd places, in many wonderfully different people, but most especially in the persons of my beloved Sisters of St. Agnes! I am so blessed, and still growing!