



Servants of the Holy Heart of Mary
2041 W. State Route 113
Kankakee, IL 60901
815.937.2380

Summer, 2018

A Warm Hello to You!

As I experience my first year as Province Leader of the Servants of the Holy Heart of Mary, I am humbled by the depth of commitment I witness as our Sisters go about their daily lives and varied ministries. I have seen love, faithfulness, joy, determination and even sadness as we all continue to respond to the needs of those who seek solace and validation. It's so heartwarming and fulfilling to be in the service of God and neighbor. Something as simple as a visit to one who is home bound, a phone call, a short note or a simple greeting on the street or in a hospital or nursing home can spread God's Love to all. It's the little things that mean so much to others. Often we overlook the impact of those acts of love and mercy.

Sister Mary Ann Hettel is a prime example of this type of service. Sister Mary Ann spent her years of ministry as a teacher and school principal. After retiring, she felt a call to do something more so she sought out Catholic Charities to see if the organization could benefit by her presence. As a result, she now serves as a Senior Companion. A Senior Companion responds to a wide variety of needs. It may be as simple as keeping company with a lonely senior or, perhaps, taking her client to the doctor or driving to pick up groceries or medicine. Sister will even help with making phone calls for household repairs and other appointments. The unfortunate issue is that there are not enough Senior Companions to respond to all of those needing help. In fact, Sister Mary Ann travels to surrounding counties to provide service to seniors because there are no Companions in their own county. She will even guide a client to find financial help.

Sister shared a story that she felt was the biggest impact she has witnessed in her own journey as Senior Companion. She was asked to visit a lady who was very depressed due to the recent loss of her husband. When she entered the lady's house, she found all of the blinds drawn and the room was devoid of any lighting. She told Sister Mary Ann that she "saw no purpose in going on". After time, Sister asked her if she could turn on a light. The next time she visited that light was on but the blinds were still closed tight. Slowly but surely, week after week she witnessed a small improvement in the woman's demeanor and finally the blinds opened...as did her spirit. This lady is now reaching out to offer *her* services at a food pantry in her town. It is a true testament to the impact that a Senior Companion can make.

As Sister Mary Ann has said, every client has a story and she feels her time with them has truly made a difference. She also offers respite care to the families of terminal clients. She will sit with the client, giving the caregivers free time to tend to their own personal needs. There is no cost to the client for these invaluable services. The Servant Companion only receives a small stipend.

It's important to keep in mind that Sister Mary Ann herself is 75 years young! She has transitioned from a lifetime of tending to children to the opposite end of the spectrum by offering her devotion and assistance to seniors. Sister is now in her third year of ministry as a Senior Companion and spends about 15-20 hours each week traversing a three county area to meet the needs of seniors. She prays for each of her clients by name, asking God to bless and watch over them. Her ministry is extremely fulfilling and she loves getting out every day to see what the world will offer to both her *and* her clients. She even received a thank you note from the Director of the Senior Companion program stating that a client wrote her and called Sister her "rock". It's apparent that she's making tremendous impacts in people's lives. What a humbling expression of gratitude!

Sister Mary Ann is also involved with Child Network, where she serves as a Child Advocate within the court system, in addition to volunteering at Harbor House, a shelter for women. We are grateful for her dedication and enthusiasm in responding to the underserved. May God grant her many more healthy years of health and service to those who need it most. Thank you, Sister Mary Ann.

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On another note, you may remember that we began holding an annual picnic in Kankakee in 2014. It occurs every September and this will be our ***fifth year!*** Please come and join us...it's a great way for all of the sisters to catch up and reconnect with those of you who have touched our lives in so many ways. We always have such a good time! Be sure to add the following to your calendar...

**SSCM 5<sup>th</sup> Annual Family Picnic**  
**Saturday, September 8<sup>th</sup>**  
**12:00 pm to 3:00 pm**  
**One Heart One Soul Spirituality Center**  
**2041 W. State Route 113 ~ Kankakee, IL 60901**

A number of our Sisters will be there and would love to visit with you. There will be food, beverages, raffles, SSCM Bingo as well as updates on the Sisters' ministry at Bethany House, a place for young immigrant women. Feel free to bring a friend.....the more the merrier! We look forward to seeing you!

**Please R.S.V.P. on the enclosed envelope by September 1<sup>st</sup>**  
**with the number attending or call 815.937.2380**  
***and leave a message so that we have ample food and beverages for all!***

In Mary's Heart,

*Sister Carol, SSCM*

Sr. Carol Karnitsky, sscm  
Province Leader