

Sr. Melanie Hannigan, OP – 60 Year Jubilee

Sr. Melanie Hannigan, OP, was born in New Haven, Connecticut, graduated from St. Mary's Academy, entered the Novitiate of the Dominican Sisters of St. Mary of the Springs, Columbus, Ohio, and made her Profession of Vows in 1948. She is celebrating her 60th Jubilee this year.

“Having been baptized in a church staffed by the Dominican Friars, and having had my faith nurtured there, I suspect that, without my knowing it, the spirit of Dominic was developing in me,” Sr. Melanie says. “At St. Mary’s Academy, I realized through readings in religion classes that religious life was a possible life choice for women who wished to serve others in the Church. Prior to this revelation, I had thought that ‘nuns’ always had been ‘nuns,’ probably from another ‘planet!’”

Sr. Melanie has never regretted following what she perceived to be God’s will for her. She points out that it was something within that told her that entering religious life was the right thing to do. After 60 years as a Dominican, she explains her perseverance as follows: “Dominic’s love for the Church and his wisdom, almost 800 years ago, in founding an Order based on democratic principles and dedicated to proclaiming the Word through prayer, preaching, and poverty continue to sustain me.”

Sister holds a Bachelor of Science from the College of St. Mary of the Springs, a Master of Science from Fordham University, and a Doctor of Education from Columbia University. She taught in elementary schools in New York, Pennsylvania, and Ohio, served as principal of Cathedral School in Steubenville, Ohio, and ministered as a special education teacher in the Mental Retardation Program of the Archdiocese of New York.

Sr. Melanie joined the Education Department at Ohio Dominican University (ODU) to develop a teacher preparation program in special education. During her 16 years at ODU, she and Rev. Ralph Karl, O.M.I, co-founded St. Joseph’s Home in Westerville, Ohio. After serving as Assistant Superintendent of Schools for the Archdiocese of Hartford, Connecticut, Sr. Melanie became Division Head at the Graduate School of The College of New Rochelle. She was the founder of Dominican Supported Living Services, Inc., in New Haven and is currently serving as a Consultant/Certification Officer of the Teacher Education Programs of Albertus Magnus College in New Haven.